

THE
DOCTRINE
OF
SCHISM
Fully Opened and Applied
TO
Gathered Churches.
OCCASIONED

By a Book entituled, *Sacrilegious Dis-
sention of the Holy Ministry rebuk-
ed: and Tolerated Preaching of the
Gospel Vindicated.*

By the Author of Toleration not to be
Abused by the Presbyterians.

*When once Parties are engaged by their Opin-
ions in Anti-Churches and fierce disputing:
The Flesh and Satan will be working in them
against all that is Holy, Sweet, and Safe,
Bixters Det. p. 57.*

*Lond:m, Printed by S. G. and E. G. for Jamies
Collins, and sold by Abisha Brocas in Exon,
1672.*

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TO THE
READER.

GOOD READER, thou art made the Judge betwixt us: examine our arguments, and observe the manner, how we handle them, and one another impartially; and then, if thou hast no favour, yet judge righteously, and I submit.

Or, if thou hast any favour, I entreat thee to bestow it in reading those few first Chapters, that are spent in Altercation. There thou wilt come to Argument, and be there as severe as thou wilt.

To the Reader.

I confess, I have taken the liberty sometimes to use a little pleasantness, rather than be Angry with a Severe Adversary ; that perhaps may incur thyensure : Yet consider my provocations thereunto, and thou wilt either pardon me, or condemn me with pity.

To trouble the READER with Personal Altercations, or to use any thing like Drollery, in a serious Argument, I like not very well, my Self : And though I know not why my own heart should condemn me for either ; yet, I fear him, that is greater than my heart, and knows all things ; and judge it safest to say, that, as I never wrote in this manner before, so, I hope, I shall not be provoked to do so again.

May my Adverse Brother have the same mind : Yea, I hope he is so good a man, that by his own better principles (if not by my Arguments) as also by experience (the grosseness of his Brethrens Separations, being far be-

To the Reader.

beyond what he seemed to suspect) he
hath already suffered himself to be
satisfied, of the evil and danger of
our gathered Churches, both by Rea-
son and Sence.

*The G O D of Peace and Truth be
with thee, and with his poor Church,*

Farewel,

Some single Sermons, and
other Discourses touching the
present Differences in the
Church; printed for James
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to a late Book entitled A Discourse of
the*

the Religion of England, price 6 d.

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NON.



Non-Conformists NEW-CHURCHES SINFUL.

CHAP. I.

*The Introduction. The Answerer's Title and
the Impertinency of it.*



He Confident Questionist, as his Answerer calls him, in this will yet be confident, that, not many will not take the task and burthen upon them to read the Answer; and that, but few of them that read it, will be able to understand it: and that few or none of that small number, that shall think they understand it, will be able to see the Consequence of it: or, lastly, if any shall chance to

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be so lucky; they must be exceeding kind, as well as wise, if they can endure, without very much patience and some indignation, its *Undertaking, Method and Manner of Reasoning*; in all which, it pitties me to observe the Author so like himself; and so deserving the Title, of the *Episcopal Patron of Presibery*, and the *Independent Catholick Prelate of Non-Conformity*.

The *modest dress* of the *Body of the Book* may answer for it Selfe; but 'tis confess, the *Mouth of it speaks great Swelling Words*: The Title is; *Sacrilegious desertion of the holy Ministry Rebuked, and Tolerated Preaching of the Gospel Vindicated*. What *Conjuring* is here? I am afraid the *Spirits* are disturb'd! *Sacrilegious desertion of the holy Ministry Rebuked!* The *Holy Ministry Sacrilegiously deserted?* What *impiety* is this? a heinous *Crime* indeed, and worthy a very severe *Rebuke*. But where are the *Criminals?* who are they that have wrought this *Abominable* thing? Sure the *Answerer* himself, is in no wise guilty: no, he presently assures you, that he is firmly *resolvued* to the contrary; and in this point, I believe, he will as easily answer for the *Questionist*. Who then doth he mean to Rebuke? not the Conformists; they have no liberty to be *Silent* though others have to *Preach*. Besides, if they should, especially the

Usur-

Upurpers among them; I presume, if *way* might thus be made for the *right Owners*, our *Author* would not be much troubled. Without Controversy, then, he means his *Brethren* the *Non-Conformists*: and have you, indeed, *deserted* your holy Ministry? you are too too blame, and must be *Rebuked*: Or have you not already done it? yet, 'tis to be feared, you *may* chance to do it: Or, though at present you are every where found, rather too *busy* in the exercises of your gifts; and are not unlikely *so* to *continne*, yet this *Questionist* hath said something, that in the *Consequence* of it, seems to perswade you to *desert* your Office; or, at least *hereafter* you *may* possibly be urged thereunto, by some *shly reasonings*, either of this *Questionist*, or *some other such Pamphleteer*. Now this *Desertion* of the holy Ministry, is a thing of that dangerous *Consequence*, especially in *You*, and at such a time as *this*; that, though it be but in *potentia remotissima*, and *only* not impossible to come to pass, it must be *timely* observed, by a wise *Watchman*; and as if it were *already* in *All*, it must be *Rebuked*.

For this *Desertion* of the holy Ministry is *Sacrilegious*: there is *such* a thing, in our *Author's* Judgment, however some of his *Brethren* think as *Sacrilege*, under the Gospel a *Stealing ones Self*, who is *Consecrased* to

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God in the Holy Ministry, from the exercise of it, is a plain *robbing* God himself of his Service and consequently, *Sacrilege*: and I fear, this hint, especially if practised upon, may bring to our minds and observations too, another kind of *Sacrilege*, that our *Author* was not well aware of: For are there not some *People Separated, Dedicated, and in a fence, Consecrated to God*; and as justly *Sitled Gods-People*, as the *Preachers, Gods-Ministers?* And if these should be stolen away from God, in his *Churches and Ministers*, to whose care he hath committed them, is not God himself then *robbed of them?* and ought not this kind of *Sacrileg* also to be feared and *Rebuked?* A worthy *Presbyterian* once thought so and honestly gave the World warning of some *small effects* of it in these words: This (said he) brings *Strife and Envyings among Ministers, when others steal away their Members; and bring farther proved, &c. p. 84.* *Slightings and Contempt upon their Persons and Ministry; and at last, a lamentable Separation, as we see at this day.*

But the *Answerer* must crave your pardon; for indeed the *excessive Fidelity* of his Brethren to their *Preaching-Office*, leaves no room or occasion for his *Rebuking-Office*. Besides, *Sacrilege* has a tender *Edge*, and may chance

Churches Sinful.

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chance to cut ones fingers, if not warily handled. Therefore, though perhaps he had thoughts when he wrote his *Title-page*, to have spoken something upon this *Subiect*; yet, his Mind it seems, is not priviledg'd from change; for, at present he hath wav'd that Argument, and *Sacrilegious desertion of the holy Ministry*, shall escape his Severity till another opportunity.

Doubt it not, for if you turn over but *one* leafe, you are secur'd: he, there as the use is, presents you again with the *Title* of his Book; but there you find nothing of *Sacrilegious desertion of the holy Ministry Rebuked*: no, this first *Menace* is now wisely omitted, either by the *Author* or the *Printer*: Wisely, I say, for *Desertion of the holy Ministry*, is scarcely *any more* heard of, much less *Rebuked*, throughout his *whole Book*: However, let not *his Ministry* be deserted: the *Sermon* may be good, though beth *it* and the *Priest* forget the *Text*.

CHAP. II.

Of the Answerers discription of Himself: his abusive Terms touching Non-Conformity, and his mistake of Armagh's Reduction: those that offer'd it, 1660. were no less Presbyterians: his change of the Question.

HE worthily observes, the *Questionists* vanity in honouring himself with the *Name*, of a *Lover of Peace and Truth*: and indeed 'twas *sauinely done*: the *Answerer* may promote the *Truth* by the liberty of *Errors*; and seek for *Peace* by pleading for, if not practising *Divisions*: but who are you, *Sir Confident*, that you, should so much as pretend to the *love* of either.

But, pray Mr. *Answerer* what is your *Name*? there are many that say they *know* you by your *Reason* and *Passion*, and by your *Words* and *Works*; but pray you let me know your *Name*. You *have told* me already; and I find it at *large* in your *Title Page*, attended *before*, with two great *Titles* to your Book, little to the purpose but for Ceremony: and followed *after* with the train of three pompous places of *Scripture*, to fill up the Page.

One that is Consecrated to the sacred Ministry, and is resolved not to be a wilful deserter of

Churches Sinful.

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of it, in trust that any Undertakers can justify him for such Desertion at the Judgment of God; till he know better how those can come off themselves, who are unfaithful Pastors, or unjust Silencers of others.

And, is this your Name indeed? Certainly his Grace at Lambeth hath scarce a greater. Here is *Consecration*, *Resolution*, *Condemnation*, against the unfaithful of *Pastors*, and the *Injustice* of the *King* and *Parliament* for *Silencing* better: But, as the *Lion* sometimes, is not so fierce as he is *Painted*; so, I hope this is no *Scripture Name*, that indicates the *Nature* of the Person. But, so shall the *Man* be honored, that loves not *Himself*, or *Party*, above *Truth* and *Peace*.

Reader, here is nothing but meekness and gentleness and humility worthy of the *Author*, to be understood: however, the expressions sound a little otherwise, 'tis the *Questionist* only is *Confident* and *unintelligible*, though one would think at the first hearing, that this long Name is *Monstrum*, *Horrendum*, and I cannot but add, *Ingens, cui lumen Ademption*.

Now what dare not the *Man* of this great *Name*, say or do? he dare say, the *Conformists* are the *Schismaticks*; and that many of them, that now hold the places, that were formerly *Non-conformists*, are *Surpers*; and that it

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is faithfulness to the King to disown such kind of *Usurpers*, though establish'd in their *Places* and *Power* by the *Laws* of the Land. p. 39.

He dare say 'tis *Impudence* and *Ignorance* of the present State of *England* to call those *Presbyterians* that did at the King's Return offer Arch-Bishop *Ushers* *Form of Episcopal Government*, as he calls it, for *Concord*; though Mr. *Calamy* was one of that Number, whose Name is found in *Smeectimus*.

He dare call that book a *Form of Episcopal Government*, contrary to the Express Title of it, which is a *Reduction of Episcopacy to the Forme of Synodical Government*. Which, as

Dr. *Bernard* well observes, was only an expedient for the present Necessity, occasioned by the Tempestuous violence of that time; as an Accommodation, by way of prevention of a Total Shipwreck, threatened by the Adversaries of *Episcopacy*, as appears sufficiently by the Title of it.

It is, therefore ingeniously argued by our Author, those that are called *Presbyterians* did desire that *Episcopacy* might be reduced to the forme of *Synodical Government*, therefore they are no *Presbyterians*, they are not for *Synodical Government*.

The plain truth is, that *Reduction* propo-

seth

seth a way for Union and Consolidation of the two Governments ; but that, such a Union, as should contain both, without the loss of either; and least of all, as the necessity of that time required, of the *Presbyterian* : And consequently, those, that would submit unto that *Reduction*, might still be *Presbyterians* both in *Name* and *Thing*, however it fared with *Episcopacy*.

For, all men are not bound to subscribe or swear unto the definition of a *Presbyterian*, which our *Answerer* imposeth upon the World : or to believe, that the *Divine Right of the Ruling Elder Unordained is essential to the Presbyterian Government*; (p. 5.) for the Government may be *Synodical* without it. And I need not give him Instances, that that kind of Government was endeavoured to be *Erected*, in the several parts of the Kingdome, by the Agreement of several *Eminent Ministers* of that way, that yet denied the *Jurisdiction* of meer *Ruling-Elders*; and admitted them only as *Prudential*: and I doubt not he very well knows it to be so.

But, as to that *Application* made in 1660. which he speaks of ; 'tis too well known, that in effect it rather proposed for the *Presbyterian*, than for the *Episcopal* Government ; and had it taken, the *Bishop*, should have had left him little more than the *Name* ; who was rather,

rather, to have been a *Moderator*, or Chairman *durante vita*, than a *Bishop*, in a common acceptance: or if a *Bishop*, such a one, as might well enough have consisted with *Synodal* Government, or the design had been lost. But what need any more be said? the *Proposers* would not allow him a *Negative* voice; and consequently, the *Synod* or *Presbytery* should have *Govern'd*, either with or without his Consent: and is not this a fair *Apolo-gy*, twice offered, by our *Answerer*; that therefore, because they would have Admitted the *Reduction of Episcopacy* to their own *Presbyterial* Government, they are no *Presbyterians*.

Again; It is nothing for him to say, that the *Reasonings* of the *Questionist*, are weak and silly over and over: that they are *Confident to Admiratio-n*: full of *Noise* and *Nonsense*, *Confused* and *Unintelligible*, and *Schismatical* too. (p.29.) These are his soft and gentle Strokes upon one that deserves to be called *Names*, that would foul *Paper*, as he intimates more than once, as an Argument of his unwillingness to offend his *Reader* and *Himself*; though he have no *foul mouth*.

But he dare venture farther and say; that Mr. *Fulwoods*, Mr. *Stilemans* and Mr. *Hinckleys* Books for *Conformity* are such *Toyes*-----of *factious Disputers*. He dare say; that *his own flesh dispueth in him more Cunningly, than all*

all the Durells, Fulwoods and Stilemans in England; and yet in one thing, methinks, his spirit fails him, and he appears too much unlike the valiant Heroe I ever took him for. He, in one place, saith, p. 32. Had he had leave to confute the Silly Reasonings of Mr. Fulwood and other such Pamphleteers, he had long ago done strange things. And in another, p. 39. he would have me procure him leave to give his Reasons of Non-Conformity. Alas, good man! that he should want Leave to do such brave things; that he should want Will or Zeal to do them without leave. He saith, p. 31. that I knew that he must not give his Reasons against Conformity. But who gave him leave to Preach before the Indulgence? who gave him leave to Print this Answer? Or is it possible to speak bolder things against Conformity if he had leave to do it, than he hath done here? The Conformists are Usurpers and Schismaticks: those that Silenced the Non-Conformists are Unjust, Cruel and Sacrilegious: Conformity is guilty of Perfidiousness, Perjury and Persecution: Conformists are Proud, and contend who shall be Greatest; and Covenant never in certain points to obey Christ against the World and the Flesh. as he humbly insinuates, p. 74.

But in Earnest, can he that lets lie at this rate, perswade us, that it is only want of leave, that hath hindered his Answering the Books

Books aforesaid? Can he persuade us, that his *Obedience* to *Man*, can warrant his *omission* of so great a *Charity*, as his effectual endeavour to *rescue Conformists* from these desparate enormities? or can he think so honorably of our *Governours*, as to fear that his *strong Reasons* would more offend and provoke them, if given without their *Licence*, than these hard uncharitable, *unconscionable* insinuations, and unjust accusations, against themselves, as well as us.

Away then with this *childish passion of fear*, 'tis altogether unbecoming our *Goliath*, that *defies* the whole *Army of Israel*. You have Troops of *Propositions* always at Command, and so many Yokes of *Distinctions*, that you doubtless are able to make good what ever you have said, be it never so bad, if you *durst*, or had *leave*. But what need of *Leave*? or why should you *Fear*? what *quidlibet* or *quodlibet* can stand before you? p. 30. You are the *Man of Art*, that can *doe* and *undoe*, *prove* and *disprove* the *same* thing; or else, many of your *Friends* as well as *Enemies* have done you wrong.

I am one of his *Friends*, and I dare affirm of him, to his deserved honour; that he never yet wanted *Matter of Argument*, against the *Cause*, or of *Rebuke* against the *Person* of any *Man* that ever opposed him. He hath
one

one very strange and wonderful peice of *Ar-
tifice*; that, be the *Controversie* what it will,
he can make his *Adversary* differ with him,
about the Existence of a *God* and *Christ*, an
Heaven and *Hell*; that he may take occasion
to tell the World, that *some Teachers need*
these plain Admonitions. p.26.

But this subtil *Answerer*, hath a *more power-
ful Stratagem*, never to be escaped; for he
can make his *Adversary* say any thing, that
he, himself thinks he can *most easily* oppose;
or if he cannot make *him* say it, he can *affirm*
and *prove* he saith it; and then, *thunder* out a
Volume against *him* for *saying so*.

We have a very Notable Instance of his
Skill *this way* in our hands. If the *Questionist*
dare say, that *Toleration* ought not to be abused
by *Presbyterians*, in gathering themselves into
distinct Churches in opposition to the *Parochial*,
he will most strenuously and pertinently con-
fute him, with a *Book*, called by the hard
Name above mentioned, *Sacrilegious de-
sertion of the holy Ministry Rebuked: and Tolera-
ted Preaching of the Gospel Vindicated.*:

And if it be too palpable, that *that Author*
said nothing for the *Sacrilegious desertion of the*
holy Ministry fit to be *Rebuked*, he can, as we
before observed, quickly desert that part of
his undertaking; but yet proceed to write
*his Book in the Vindication of Tolerated Preach-
ing;*

ing; and perswade the World, with no mean Confidence, that the scope of the Book he pretends to Answer, is directly against such Tolerated Preaching. Yea, in the very beginning of his Book, p.2. And in another Character, on purpose to have the Reader note it; he expressly affirms; that he finds-- the Questionist hath the Face (though he hath not the mouth that spoke it, or the hand that wrote it) yet he hath the face to exhort them to desert their Office. But with how much Ingenuity and Justice, God and his own Conscience raust needs know already; and he must give me leave to let the World know it also, in the Chapter following.

CHAP. III.

I did not exhort them to desert their Office as he Affirmeth. His manner of Censuring less Errors. About Toleration. The Authors kindness to Non-Conformists.

SIR, I will take leave to say; you may bless your self, that you have engaged an Adversary that is a Friend; and hath neither Wit nor Will to practice upon you, as some have done upon less Provocation.

That you might have ground to run out upon

upon me, as an Enemy to *Tolerated Preaching*; you expressly affirme, p. 2. that you find I exhort you to desert your Office: and that it seemeth, p. 60. that acknowledging us *true Churches*, will not satisfie us, without What? *Actual hearing us*. We would stroke you into silence and the neglect of your Office. p. 25. You ask, p. 58, 59. whether it be *Sin in you to Preach*; and labour much, in the proof of the *Necessity* of your Preaching. And you intimate, that if the *Non Conformists* should not Preach, they should be *Idle, Cruel, Sacrilegious* and *Perfidious*: as are your words, p. 27, 28.

Now, Sir, in my *fullie* way of reasoning, I must demand, whether you do indeed find, those words, for which you persecute me, throughout your Book, in my Book, or not.

If you shall say, you do find those words, or words to that effect; I am not satisfied, unless you tell me where: for I solemnly protest, I know not. Why did you not name the page, where they were to be found, as in other cases you generally do? especially, this being the main matter of offence to you; that provoked you to so much severity throughout your Book against me; for you begin your Book to this purpose: that if it had been all my endeavour that the *Toleration* should not be abused, you should earnestly have seconded me: but when you found- that I had the *face* to exhorte

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hort you to desert your Office, &c. that I come to you in Gods Name, to charge you to forbear His work: then, you say, your Conscience bad you help to save the weaker sort that need, from such Pernicious Fallacies

Sir, I do with all earnestness, and yet meekness, let you know; that I expect you should make good your charge: shew me these words, or words that carry the same sense, in any place of my book, or confess you have wronged me, and I am satisfied.

But yet, turn the Tables, and ask your self seriously, what lashes you would have censured me worthy, should I have dealt so with you. Take an Instance of your Spirit and Charity, upon a far less occasion given you, as you conceive, in my Book; when, upon a Misinformation at most, I only Asked a Question, in a matter of no great moment, viz. Whether the Presbyterians did not heretofore refuse the Comprehension, because they could not have it without a general Toleration? See, how you lie upon me, with all fury, and say, p. 62, 63, 64. This hath no bounds, and it grieveth me to read it. O Posterity! How will you know what to believe? you should not by Question, have vented such a falsehood. And yet, notwithstanding all this vehemence, in the next pages, you seem your self to intimate, in my weak opinion, grounds sufficient for the Ru

mour and Suspition, and consequently the Question: But I am not obstinate in my own Defence, leaving my Question and your Censure upon it, with your Discourse and Confession about it, to the mercy of the Reader, who will judge betwixt us, whether we will or not.

However, thanks be to God, (though by your charging me to have written things, that I have not written, contrary to plain Truth and Justice, you have given me far greater provocation) yet, I say, thanks be to God, you have not tempted me to turn your own words upon you, and to say to you, as you do to me, [Repent of such Calumnies, and study not to aggravate your fault by excuses -- we lament his want of common sense or modesty -- what dealing is to be expected from such men -- with what forehead -- is this Humanity or ministerial Fidelity, to begin your Book with so direct an untruth, and to stand to it, and repeat it so often in the face of the World?

Lord! what have I ever said or done in order to the silencing of Non conformists, as you frequently seem to charge me? yea, what have I not done or said, as I was able and had any opportunity, that their mouths might be opened? the World knows my several publick endeavors to that purpose; I do not say

my silly Arguments, (as you meekely call them) but, perhaps, my Mediation (as some persons will more ingeniously acknowledge); for the peaceable Non-conformists, from the Kings Return to the day of the Indulgence, and since too, hath not been altogether ineffectual, and perhaps considering all that hath been too much, and my Superiors have been very candid if they have not thought it troublesome.

I must take the boldnes to add, that were I *conscious* to my self, that any thing I ever said or did, hath been so great a *Remora* in the way of accommodation betwixt non-conformity and the Church of England, as the boisterous reasonings and desires of some men, I fear I should carry it with sorrow to my grave: If I err in this censure, I beg the pardon both of God and them.

C H A P. I V.

'Tis not fair to charge Consequences for Doctrines; much less to say, the Consequence is asserted; let the Answerer be Judge. Mr. Baxter was not abused.

I Observed, that you charged me untruly with dissuading you to *desert your Office*, and have cause to fear, you will *make excuses* your self, although you will not *allow* it in others: and I cannot but expect you will say *thus*, or to *this effect*; That though I do not assert in plain terms, or in words that will admit or *bear* that *fence*, yet the consequence of my Discourse, is to *take* you off from *Preaching*, while I would dissuade you from *Gathering-Churches*.

For I find, after I have read long in your Book, and even towards the latter end of it, you have patience thus far to *explain* your self. Because, say you, p. 57. I would prove your *separation* sinful, I would therefore prove your *preaching* sinful. Again, p. 59. if God say, *preach*, and the Law say, *preach not in Temples*; we may conclude, we *must* preach out of the Temples. And because I speak against *erecting Separated Congregations to* your selves, you say, p. 70. I mean it is *sin in you to exercise your Ministry*: i. e. you

mean, this is the consequence of what I say against your separation: For, can we preach, as you add, without *Auditors*? and can these *Auditors* be no *Congregation*?

Thus you do, (pardon me if) I think, not very accurately mend the matter, nor very intelligibly explain your meaning. But, I remember, you told me, p. 33. the *Presbyterians* do not love confusion: And also p. 4. that you are no *Presbyterian*.

But, my Brother, I must needs mind you, that whether this consequence be strong or not, I am sure the *extuse* is weak, and unwarrantable by the Laws of all sober disputation.

1. For admit the consequence to be *fair* and *just*, your dealing with me is *neither*, when you charge me with an *assertion* which only follows, or may be drawn from my *proposition*. It is not allowable to say the *consequent* of my opinion is *my opinion*, and that I hold it: much less hath it any *colour* of *candor* or justice, to say, I *assert* it, and *maintain* it. How then can you answer me, or give me *satisfaction*, for saying, first, that that which *your self* hath argued from my *proposition*, is *my proposition*; and then *writ a book against me* for it.

This is not too like a *favorable Disputant*, were the consequence most *obvious* and *immediate*;

mediate; whereas in the case in hand, 'tis neither so, nor so; but contrarily, very doubtful, obscure, and remote, your self being Judge.

The Question here is, Whether I cannot write against gathering *Churches* out of our *Churches*, and yet not exhort you to *desert your Ministry*? You hold it in the *Negative*. Now, to fill up the *vacancies* of your former uneven Argument, to make it good, there is need of the skill of a learned *Propositionist* to work thus.

You *must preach*; you may *not* preach in the *Temples*, therefore you *must* preach *somewhere else*: Here's the *place* provided, but where are the *People*? Let's try again, if you *must* preach, you *must* have *people* to hear you: there are *none* to be had, but such as belong to *our Churches*; therefore you *must gather Churches* out of *our Churches*; therefore I that exhort you *not* to *gather Churches* out of *our Churches*, exhort you to *desert your Office and Ministry*; and therefore, by defending your *Office*, you answer my *Book of Toleration* not to be *abused*, by *gathering Churches out of Churches*.

Thus *strangers* greet, and both ends are at length brought together; but their *firm* friendship depends upon the strength of this *golden Chain*, or *Rope of Sand*, which may come to be tried anon.

In the mean time let us change the Scene,
and then make judgement of this way of ar-
guing, your self.

Suppose I should write a Book, and in-
title it, *Sedition Rebuked*; and call this a *Re-
ply to your Answer*: taking it for granted,
that every one would see the consequence as
well as my self; and thereupon, at every turn,
I should charge you with the *Defence of Se-
dition*, and labor against you to prove *Se-
dition a sin*; meaning all this while, (though
never observing any such thing, when I pur-
posely and largely, with about threescore Pro-
positions endeavor de industria to state the
Question) that *Sedition* lies at the bottom, and
in the consequence and tail of your Discourse
thus; in many places you intimate, the
Priest is intollerable; and there, whether the
People will endeavor regularly to remove
him or not, you exhort them to *disown* and
forsake him, and the place by *Law* appointed
for Publick Worship, and to gather them-
selves into *another* Church, under *another*
(Non-conforming) *Minister*: This is to ex-
hort the People to begin a *publick Reforma-
tion* without their *Governors*; this is *Sedition*,
or the *way to Sedition*, to say no worse; and
this will therefore *justifie* my manner of wri-
ting against you, and my frequent charging
sedition, and the *defence of sedition* upon you,

Pray

Pray be ingenuous, how would you like this way of arguing? Whether the consequence be true or false, you will not say this is fair dealing; you would say you were highly injured, I am sure you would.

And now I am come so near it, I will present you with such an instance in your Book, that will to the purpose convince you at once, both of your Ingenuity in this way of arguing, and of the censure you give me, upon a false supposition, that I had abused my worthy Friend Dr. Baxter, in affirming, that he had said something that he never said. Tis thus:

You tell me, p. 48. that Baxter (as you familiarly call him) taketh himself to be abused by my Allegations, & provoketh me to cite any of his words which are against Non-conformists preaching as they have opportunity; and somewhat sharply mind me, that he and Mr. Ball understand themselves better then I do them.

Now, who would not hence conclude; that I had said, that that reverend Person had written against Non-conformists preaching, as they have opportunity. But where have I said so, or any thing to that purpose? I know your civility and veracity will engage you to shew it; therefore you refer your Reader to p 16. of my Book: There, indeed, I find the place which you mean, but not one tittle of

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the words or thing you say. My words there are these; Particularly the Arguments of Mr. Baxter and Mr. Crofton, for communion with our Parochial Congregations are still the same, and ought to be answered, before you begin your work of Separation, and think of building new *synagogues*.

But is this to say, that Mr. Baxter hath written against Non-conformists preaching as they have opportunity? Yet if Mr. Baxter hath

Cure of Church-
Divisions, and De-
fence of against
Bagshaw.

writ nothing against Non-
Conformists Preaching,
which I never said; Mr.
Baxter hath written Argu-
ments for Communion with

our Parochial Congregations, which I did say,
and still maintain; and neither Mr. Baxter
nor your self will deny it, except in Drollery.

And pray tell me, what reason hath that learned and peaceable man to hold himself abused by me, for commending his Arguments, to be considered by such as he intended them for? did he not publish them that they might be considered? or hath he chang'd his mind, and thinks them now incon siderable himself? or more unseasonable now, then when he wrote them?

I think worthily of that reverend Author, but, Sir, what you can say for your self, I know not: You ought, if I might be Judge, first

first satisfie the World that I have *not abused* Mr. Baxter; and then, to acknowledge the Abuse you have put upon *your self* and Mr. Baxter, upon *me* and the Reader, and the plain truth.

If the *censure* seem *rigorous*, judge *your self*, and *mitigate* it, if you find cause; but consider, that *you your self intimate*, that Mr. Baxter *never wrote any thing against their preaching*; and yet *you know*, that he hath written much, and that lately too, for *communion with our Parochial Congregations*: the thing I affirmed. But *this way of Reasoning*, and *undue accusation*, is so familiar a thing in the Book before me, that, I fear, I have *abused my Readers stomach*, by staying himself so long upon *one or two particulars* of so *gross a nature*.

I confess, it is as *lawful* as 'tis usual, to *confute* a proposition from the ill *consequences* and *inconveniences* of it; but this is *one thing*: and to *set up* the ill *consequence* as the *Doctrine* of the Adversary, and under that form to dispute and *write a Book* aginst it, especially without shewing the *necessity*, if not the *obviousness* and *immediateness* of such consequence, in the *stating* of the Question; all which you very skilfully think not fit to do: *this I am bold to say, is another thing*; and *such a thing as ought never to plead Indulgence*

dulgence or Toleration, especially in a grave
and grown, and practised Disputant.

However, two things ought always to be
remembred, that *incommodeum non solvit Argumentum*; and if any good may come out of
evil, yet we must not do evil that such good
may come. 'Tis a good thing for any one to pro-
vide for his Family, yet I may not steal that
I may provide for my Family: nor thus ar-
gue, I must provide for my Family, I cannot
do it except I steal; therefore I must steal, or
thus I must preach; I cannot preach but I
must gather a Church out of my Neighbors
Congregation; therefore I must gather a
Church, &c. though I before observed, there
are some that call that stealing; and that not
only from my Neighbor, but God himself.

But more of this anon; in the mean time
let it only remembred, that if you may not
preach in the Temples, as you acknowledg;
and if you cannot preach in other places, as
you more then intimate, without gathering
Churches, &c. and if this be found stealing
and unlawful, and therefore it follow, that
without conforming you cannot lawfully exer-
cise your gift of preaching, I cannot help
it.

However, at present, I have a mind to
relieve you, by doing you the kindness to
question the consequence of your Argument;
and

and that I may also relieve the Reader, and give him space to breathe a little, this shall be the matter of another Chapter.

C H A P. V.

The consequence of deserting their Office from their not gathering, disproved as not good either according to the Authors Principles, or the Answerers, or the nature of thing it self.

J Hope, by this time, you perceive you have not dealt like a very fair Disputant, in framing a proposition your self, and then publishing it to the World as mine, and as asserted and defended by my Book; and accordingly laboring to demolish it in the design and scope of your Answer, although that proposition had been the necessary, plain, and immediate consequence of what I had affirmed or denied.

But what shall I say if it indeed appear otherwise, and if that which you impose upon me, and so zealously oppose in me; be not, in any sense, the consequence of what I had said, either immediately or remotely, plainly or obscurely, or any way necessarily. And that though I do assert, that it is unlawful for you

to gather new Churches, it will not follow, either from my principles, or from the nature and truth of the thing, or from your own principles, that I must needs hold it to be unlawful for you to exercise your Ministry; or would persuade you to desert your Office, let each be examined.

1. To make your charge against me *any way tolerable*, you should make it appear at least, from *my principles*, which is not possible for you to do: for, though I judge it *unlawful* for you to *gather new Churches* to preach unto, I hold it *equally unlawful* for you to *desert your Office*: 'Tis my plain opinion, you ought rather then *either* of these, to attend upon the Ministry of the Temples; and in order thereunto to *conform*: and be it known unto you, if you knew it not before, that I am much of Mr. Fulwood's mind, who in *three Books*, published by him to that purpose, hath endeavored to *convince* you, that *this is his judgement, and that your duty*.

Now, unless an endeavor to persuade you *not to desert your Office*, be to exhort you to *desert your Office*; yea, unless I had declared, that I believe there is *no better, or no other way*, for you to *serve your Minister*, then by *gathering Churches*, how can you *affirm with honour to your wit and ingenuity*, p. 57. that by dissuading you from the

the latter, I exhort to desert the former.

2. Neither doth it follow from the nature and truth of the thing; there is no such *indissoluble connexion* betwixt these two Propositions, that from my asserting one of them, you should boldly charge me with the other.

I do say, you may not gather Churches; I do not therefore say, you may not preach: or, if I did say that *in statu quo* you may not preach; I do not say, you may not change your state, as before, and then preach; I do not say, the King may not open the door of the Temple to you, that you might preach there; or if I had said all this, yet I had not said, you should desert your Office; for *not to preach* is one thing, and to *desert* your Office is another.

For no man may say, that a Minister deserts his Office, who living in a place of Christian Government, and hath no title, but sincerely desires it, though he do actually preach, without publick licence, or the leave of a particular Pastor; and he that acknowledgeth any thing of Government, cannot be sober and believe that his Office obligeth him to go into Houses for want of a Temple; and there endeavor to draw the people from the publick worship, without the leave of their faithful Pastor; and that too, just at the times appointed

appointed for the publick worship , as the cu-
stome generally is , notwithstanding your ex-
ample and Edicts to the contrary , and this ,
forsooth , because he *must preach* .

Yea , once more , admit that a lawfully or
dained Minister rightfully inducted into his
cure , should be suspended , justly or unjustly ,
by a lawful Authority ; (and I think this may
venture to comprehend something of our
present case :) will any rule of good Policy ,
or regular Reason , allow this Minister to
preach within the bounds of that Authority
that silenc'd him , before such Authority is
satisfied , either for the offence , or of the inno-
cence of the Person , and the unwarrantable-
ness of the sentence .

Neither can I see (pardon my dulness)
how any Government can be secured from the
danger of General Confusion , that shall suf-
fer this Principle [we must preach] to bear
it down . I wish heartily I may be found
mistaken in this at last ; however , I am sure ,
if persons thus suspended shall (during their
suspension) forbear to preach , at least till
the *innocency* of their Cause , and the *unjust-
ness* of their silencing be very clear and un-
doubted , generally to persons *unconcerned* ,
they do not by their *obedience* and *unvolun-
tary silence* desert their Office , though they
be yet in the possession of their Cures : their

non-actual preaching in obedience to Authority, deserves a better name then a sacrilegious desertion of the Holy Ministry; much less if Ministers have no Cures of their own, may they be charged with *deserting* their Office, because they *gather* not our people from our Temple-worship, that they may have *Auditors* to preach unto, though without so doing they *could not* preach.

3. Let us now, lastly, try the strength of this consequence by *your own* principle discovered to us by your *concessions* and *purposes* in your Book; but more especially, in your *advice* given to the *Non-conformists*.

In p. 92. you say, *In Parishes where all may hear the Parish-Minister, I would not have you (Non-conformists) without necessity preach at the same hour of the day, but at some middle time, that you may not seem to vie with him for Auditors, nor to draw the People from him; but let them go with you to hear him, and after come and hear you.* I do acknowledge that in other places, though you omit it here, you provide that the Minister of the Parish be *faithful, truly endeavoring the salvation of his flock.*

I am not here to urge, or insist upon the inconveniences of such a practice; and if the *Non-conformist* be an humble, discreet, and good man, for my part I should not much fear

fear them; but my business is to collect from this Advice of yours, that you your self can hardly believe, that *deserting* your Office, doth necessarily follow the *not gathering* of *Churches*; and that not only in *mine*, but in the *common* and *usual* understanding of the *terms*.

For thus, as you well observe, the *Non-conformist* would but hold a *Chappel meeting* under, and be *subservient* in his work to the *Parish-Minister*; and such preaching would in no ordinary construction be termed *Schism*, or a *gathering a Church out of*, or *distinct*, much less in *opposition* to the *Parish-Church*, but a *furtherance*, if well managed, to the *common interest* and concern of it; as the office of a *School-master* in *Catechising* the *yonger* sort upon the *week-days*.

And could we find that *this* cause had been indeed taken upon the *foresaid conditions*, as you advise, we should not have thought we had not had much reason to endeavour to prevent the *Abuse of Toleration* by the *Presbyterians*, or to complain as we do.

But 'tis sad to observe *their practice quite contrary*, generally so far as we can learn, and particularly in the populous *City* where I dwell, that are most *conveniently* ordered into *Parishes*, and the best provided of *faithful Ministers*, for to *such places* the *Non-conformists*

formists generally resort, and set up their meetings in direct opposition to the *Parochial Churches*, at the *same time* with the publick Worship; not endeavoring, in the least, any communion with it, or the Parish-Minister; but to as much discouragement of him as possibly they can.

And in *those* other places, where they have set up their *Meetings*, (there are but few that think it convenient to venture in the Country Parishes) they take the *same* course, without any regard to the distinction of *faithful* and *unfaithful* Ministers; and this is the thing we call *Schism* and *sinful separation*, and unlawful gathering of Churches out of Churches, and cannot see how you can believe that the *necessity* of your Office can justifie such *dividing* practices, who seem to detest them.

Yea, if such as bear the *name* and *licence* of *Presbyterian*-*Ministers*, would follow *your advice*, and only gather *temporary* Assemblies (waiting for a *fixed* better state, as you speak) in *London*, and in some *Country Parishes*, where the Ministers are *intollerable*, till they are better provided for, though perhaps we justly differ from you about the *number* of *intollerable* Ministers, and must in *reason* judge, that your *first* endeavors should try to have such Ministers remov'd;

D

yet,

yet, I conceive, we should not have so great cause of lamentation , as now is too too notoriously given us , by the unreasonable *cans-*
fers of our Divisions.

Sir, give me leave to say and believe, upon the observation of the *peaceable Principles*, I find now and then *hinted* , even in the midst of your *heat* against me , in your Book, that did you *rightly apprehend* how *matters are carried* by these *Church-gatherers* for the dividing , dissipating , and as much as in them lies , destroying our *Parochial Churches*, you would return to your *first thoughts* , and no longer *oppose* , but *second* me.

CHAP. VI.

The Question is first stated, nor unintelligible :
Now again clear'd and free'd from his
Exceptions.

You now perceive that the main of your Book is answered, by demonstrating how little it is to the purpose, to say no worse : and thus you see, what trouble you put me to, to answer Nothing. p. 40.

But Soft, Sir, What if enough be found besides, and, *on the by*, to Confute you ? perhaps, there is nothing in *your Book*, at least, your Answerer might think so, sufficient to provoke so great a Man, to set his wit directly against you. If it be so, I accept his mercy ; for then, the Match being the more equal, I do the better conceive a Confidence to defend my self : and, at last, to the point.

In the State of my Question, I first supposed, that the Presbyterians would not joyn with the Independents : but, therein, my Answerer intimates, p. 28. I was mistaken ; for it is an Article of his Faith (so far as faith is concerned in the point) that the Presbyterians will joyn with (their now friends) the Independents, not as a Sect, &c. Yea, p. 29. that they will joyn with the Sect (as he is pleased to ho-

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nour us) of the Diocesan Prelatists, in the Parish Churches also. O the Charity of Presbyterians! and the length of their Armes, that can embrace persons at so great a distance! But pray, Sir, what do you mean, by joyning with the Independents? Will you, indeed, joyn with them in their Congregations? If this be not your meaning, you are again upon the point of little to the purpose. But if it be, and yet you will joyn with them as a Sect, your Judgment is as deep, as your affection is broad.

But to proceed, upon that mistake, my Question was shortned to this purpose; Whether the Presbyterians, as things now stand, ought in Conscience or Prudence, to Set up for Themselves, or to Worship God with the rest of their Neighbours, in their several, proper Parochial-Congregations?

What I meant by their Setting up for themselves, was plained in the very Question, as was just before proposed: viz. A refusing our Communion and a gathering themselves into distinct and separate Churches.

Now, rather, than I will run in a Maze, or venture my self in an Ocean of Tempestuous Propositions, my Answerer shall pardon me, if I Appeal to the Reader, whether my Question was not intelligible without them.

For what man is so ignorant (unless his

Know-

Knowledg hath confounded and Shipwrack'd his Reason) as not to know, who I mean by *Presbyterians*? p 45. Yea, who would not suspect the person guilty, that, when he is Indited flies, and plaises least in sight, or so dis- guiseth him, as he cannot be known: or when his friends return (as our Author for the *Presbyterians*) a *Nos inventus*. But he and the world must know, that the *Presbyterians* like non of his *excuses* or *subterfuges*. They cannot so easily deny themselves; and me-thinks, he should not deny his Brethren: they apply themselves under that Name to the King for *Licences*, as our Author acknow-ledgeth; and yet he more then Intimates they are not, at least most of them, *are not*, what they tell the King they are. And then what doth he make them, if they are not *Presbyterians*? But let him be answered, that such as deny themselves to be *Independents*, or *Anabaptists*, or *Quakers*, or *Papists*, and scruple and mince their Conformity with us; whether they be *Laity* or *Clergy*, will be cal-led *Presbyterians* whether he will or no: and such, he could not but know, I, especially meant.

2. Who knows not what I mean, by our *Parochial Churches* or *Congregations*? and who knows not, too well, what is to be understood by *Gathering Churches*; by the former practi-

ces of the *Independents*; but more especially, by these *Presbyterians*, since the *Indulgence*?

But, to talk of gathering Churches, and yet, of holding Communion with us, is a Jugglē, unworthy our *Author*: who either doth, or should know; that it is *protestatio contra factum & questionem*. I mean, 'tis generally so.

I have, as you cannot but see, both in the *Question* as proposed, and as stated, and as prosecuted, set gathering of *Churches* in opposition to our *Parochial Congregations*. And what you say to any thing else, is not to the point. And the general practice of *Church-gatherers*, too well satisfies the world what they intend; and also that the *Question* was rightly propounded, and clearly stated to any unbiassed and unprejudiced Reader, what ever you say to confound it, and with your wonted *E-laborateness* to render it *unintelligible*, p. 40. and then complain that it is so.

But the *Learning* of some men, is not ill compared to a *Pedlars Pack*; though, not so much, for that there are many things that are difficult to be found; but rather, because, if they look for any thing, every thing comes to hand.

But this be far from our *Author*; to whom we must now hearken diligently. He first sets down my *Question* verey honestly and intirely; p. 26, 27. then he nibbles a little at it,

and

and at length, bites: and tells the World, that I joyn two questions in one, which we must look to have distinctly Answered.

But what those two questions are, and where they are distinctly answered I have look't, and find not. Would he not speak distinctly to them because he hates *Divisions*? or was it his prudence to leave out *Conscience*? for he hath told us, p. 21. that to decide this case is a work of meer Christian Prudence: but where is *Conscience* then? Excluded? by what Law? that shall be tried anon,

For I shall now address my self in earnest to review the whole Question: not in two only, but in the several Cases depending upon it. A just examin whereof, will give me occasion sufficient to consider, all that he hath said to the purpose against me, as I find it scattered up and down his Book.

CHAP. VII.

Gathering-Churches charged with Schism from the Church of England, and proved to be so from the Definition of this Church. Wherein he is told what the Church of England, and Schism from it is.

THe General Question betwixt us is this; Whether it be Lawful for the Presbyterians

rians to refuse Communion with our Parish Churches, and to gather themselves into Distinct and Separate Churches.

And upon a Serious review of it, and Consideration of all that the Answerer hath said against me, and my Discourse upon it; I do renew my Charge; and positively affirm, that it is Unlawful; and as it is generally practised, 'tis a great and dangerous Schism both against the Church of England, and Particular Churches: 'tis a Schism in its own nature, and sinful in it Self. 'Tis a Schism in the Judgment of the old Nonconformists called Puritans; and also in the Judgment of the Presbyterians before 1660. and lastly, that both in Conscience and Prudence it ought at present to be avoided, or deserted, by all such, especially, as are called Presbyterians. And all this, in its several parts, and in their order, as here set down, I undertake to make good.

i. Thus to Separate and to Gather Churches is a Schism, with respect to the Church of England. Now, as Divines speak of a Schism in a Church, and a Schism from a Church; so in a diverse respect, this practice is guilty of both. For if you consider the Church of England, as particular Organized Church, 'tis a Schism from: but if, as part of the Universal Visible Church only, as the Nonconformists use to term it, then 'tis Schism in it.

It

It is a Schism from the Church of England as such; by dividing from its *Governours, Members, Worship and Assemblies*: as I more than Intimated in my Book, p. 8. and this ought to have been distinctly observed at least, by my *Answerer*: but instead thereof, how he stumbles and blunders! looking carefully and making great *Outcries* after that, which I laid just before him.

You charge us, saith he, p. 37. with *Schism from the Church of England*. Again; p. 38. Tell us what you mean by *Schism from the Church of England*. Again; p. 35. We are told of *Schism from the Church of England*; as if it were a Monstrous and *unheard of thing*: and then puzzles, pitifully puzzles himself and his Reader, in an impertinent pursuit of the *Head of the Church of England*: as if without a certain and *infallible knowledge* of that, there could be no *such thing* as a *Church of England*, or *Schism* from it. Wearing himself, for five or six pages, at his *old game*, of *nothing to the purpose*.

But, methinks, he labours with a very vehement desire after this *great truth*; and could he be *sure* to have it, he will not say how much *Money*, as well as *Pains*, he would give for it: yea he roundly offers me (how consistent with his *gravity* I do not observe) but he roundly offers me *all the Money in his Purse*

to make him understand but what the Church of England is, p. 35.

Well, if you will promise me to be humble and teachable, and that you are not too old to learn; though I have no mind to your money, I will shew my readiness, and charity at least, to relieve you in so great a Streight, though my Judgment may fail, and my Definition be as despicable as my silly Arguments.

The Church of England, is a Community, Consisting of professed Christians, United in the same Government, Doctrine and Worship: according to the 39. Articles, and Homilies; Her Liturgy, and Canons and Laws; and divided into Parochial Assemblies, for the more convenient Worshipping of God.

Might such a Notion of the Church of England have superceded all his Finesses of Wit and Distinctions about the Constitutive Ecclesiastical Head, as he speaks, (how learnedly I leave to his Friend Mr. Bagshaw) I think his labour might have been well enough spared: For he may Consider we are United in the same Government, and the Pars Regens; is the only part he himself requires to be added to the Pars Subdita to Constitute a Church Organiz'd, in a proper political sense. p. 38. Now you will not deny, either of these parts; and consequently, you have found the whole of the Church of England, as you say,

say, Organiz'd in a proper political Sence.

And, it hence follows, that 'tis material to our point, to determine *certainly*, what is the Ecclesiastical Head of this Church : whether, we that are Members of it, are all united in the King as *Persona mixta cum Sacerdote*, and not merely a Civil head as you insinuate; he being *Supream in all Causes and over all Persons as well Ecclesiastical as Civil*. Or whether, any think it more proper to Radicate this Union in his Grace of *Canterbury*, as *Primate over all England*: or whether in both the *Arch-Bishops* who hold Communion in the same *Doctrine, Worship and Laws*: and in whom, *both the Provinces are United*: or lastly, whether we are not rather United in *all the Bishops and Pastors of the Church of England*, as the *Pars Regens*; and our Government in the *Church*, considered *purely* and abstractly from the *Civil Government*, be not rather an *Aristocracy* than a *Monarchy*. Whether this, or the other be the true; to know it is not *necessary*, nor of any *use*, that I can perceive in the present Controversy.

But it is a certain *Vanity*, to say ; because I cannot find the *Head*, I will deny the *Body*, though I must withal deny my own *Senses*. Because you cannot know *certainly*, who was your *Father*, will you deny your *Mother* which is the *surer side*?

There

There is a *Church of England*, and what it is I have endeavoured to shew : and by the Nature of it, we may more easily conclude what *Schism* from it, is ; and who are guilty of this ; whether such as Separate and *Gather Churches* or not.

C H A P. VIII.

What Schism from the Church of England is, and whether gathering of Churches, now is practised, be not guilty of it.

I. **W**HAT is *Schism* from the *Church of England*? sure it is not a denying its *Doctrine*, or holding any thing contrary thereunto ; he that holdeth *per verum Dogma* only, is an *Ad Tit. cap. 3. Heretick*, no *Schismatick*, as *St. Hierom* teacheth.

Mr. *Newcomen*, a learned *Presbyterian*, as I observed in my last, lets the *Separatists* know, that their agreeing with us and the *Reformed Churches* in *Doctrines* that are *Fundamental*, their holding *one Head* and *one Faith*, doth not excuse them from being guilty of *breach of unity*, so long as they hold not *one Body*, *one Baptism*. For he cites *Beza*, another learned *Presbyterian*. So that you may *Annotat. in 1 Cor. 1.10.* be

be willing to subscribe to the 39. *Articles*,
and yet be *Schismaticks* from the *Church of
England*.

It remains therefore, that such *Schism* re-
lates to the other Bands of our union and
fellowship with this *Church*; to wit, her
Government and *Worship*, and consequent to
the latter, her *Members* and *Assemblies*.

Thus you see we must return to our first
determination; that *Schism* from the *Church*
of *England*, is a *sinful dividing from*, or a *dis-
solving our union and communion with her in*
*her Governors and Members, Worship or As-
semblies*. This is the least that we mean by
Schism from the *Church of England*; and is
called *Separation* or *Schism negative*; which
is made *positive*, and more formally such,
when those that have so *separated*, set up
their *Altar* against *hers*, and erect other *Con-
gregations* in opposition to *hers*.

The *Schismatick* by Dr. Ha- Of *Schism*.
mond out of Ignatius, is described Epist. 40.
to be *Filius impius*, &c. *An impious Son*,
which having contemned the *Bishops*, and for-
saken the *Priests* of God, dares constitute an-
other *Altar*. And again Epist. 57. the *Schis-
maticks* are they, that having left their *Bishop*,
set up for themselves abroad another *false Bishop*;
and all their adherents are involved in the same
guilt, who joyn with the *Schismaticks* against
their *Bishops*. Two

Two things here must be supposed, 1. That we are the *pars subdita*, and do owe this communion and obedience to these *Governors* of the Church. 2. That they impose no *unlawful* conditions of this communion upon us; though if they should, how far we may separate must take its measure from such impositions, which is another Question to be discussed *anors* in another place; and at present I shall only add, that so far as I understand my *Answerer*, so far as the people are concerned in the conditions of our communion, we are not likely to differ much in this point. But for the first of these suppositions, if there be any force in Scripture precepts, requiring obedience to our *spiritual Guides*, or in *Civil and Ecclesiastical Laws*, which are very severe to that purpose, nothing can be more evident, than that all *English Christians* do owe communion and obedience to the *Governors* of the *Church of England*, whose Government stands established by both sorts of *Laws*, and is so acknowledged by the *Declaration* it self.

Defence of And your Friend Mr. Baxter is his Cure, not obscure in this point; We p. 76. must own, saith he, a *National Church*, as it is improperly so denominated from the *King*, that is the *Civil Head*-- and as it is a *community of Christians*, and a part

part of the Universal Church, United by the Concord of Her *Pastors*; who in *Synods* may represent the whole Ministry, and be the means of their *Agreement*.

He saith; we must own the *National Church*: I say, then we must not *disown* Her. And must we not likewise own the *King*, as the *Head* thereof? and all the *Bishops* and *Pastors* and *Governors* under Him? And then, what *liberty* is left us to *disown*, *deny*, or *renounce* their *Persons* or *Authority*?

Let such especially, as have taken the *Oath* of *Supremacy*, and received *Ordination* from *Episcopal* hands, yet better consider, those solemn *Obligations* upon them, added to the *Laws*; and take heed, in earnest, of *Perfidiousness* and *Perjury*.

Let them consider, what is to *renounce* all *foraign Jurisdiction*: and to their power to *assift* and *defend* all *Jurisdiction* (*Spiritual* as well as *Temporal*) granted or belonging to the *Kings Highness*: and how well a renouncing *Obedience* to the *Government* of the *Church*, consists with that which we have sworn therein.

It is true, all are not called *actually* to take this *Oath*; yet it is as true, that the *Ministers* and *Officers* of all *Sorts*, generally, are; and all *Graduates* in the *University*: and for others, as they are the *Kings Subjects*, they are
un-

unquestionably taken to be, under the same *Obligation*, as to the matter of it; and are born to the *Duty* as well as the *Priviledge* of Subjects of this Realm: and therefore, we find, that this *Oath* is Administred; not only to *Oblige*, but rather, as a *Test* to trie, and also to secure the fidelity of such, as take it, as is evident in the *Statute*.

Again, let all *Ministers Ordained by Bishops* (I hope I have now to do with one) in the Name of God, seriously consider, what they promised to do at their *Ordination*; being most solemnly interrogated by the Bishop in the Name of God and of his *Church*, as the words are.

More particularly: the *Bishop* demands; *Will you then give your faithful diligence always for to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments and Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath Commanded; and as This Church and Realm hath received the Same, according to Commandments of God, so that you may teach the People committed to your Cure and Charge, with all diligence, to keep and observe the Same.*

What *Answer* did you make hereunto? I will do so by the help of the Lord. And thus, you, at once acknowledge that the *Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of Christ* as received by this *Church*, are according to Gods *Commandments*; and that you would give your

your faithful diligence always, so to Minister them, as this Church hath received them: and lastly, that with all diligence you would teach your People to observe the Same.

Again, the Bishop demands; Will you reverently Obey your Ordinary, and other chief Ministers, unto whom is committed the Charge and Government over you: following with a glad Mind and Will their Godly Admonitions, and submitting your selves to their Godly Judgment.

What did you Answer to this? I will do so, the Lord being my Helper. Wherein you both acknowledge the Government of the Church over you, and promise Obedience thereunto.

And, it is no pleasure to me, to observe; that one, that I dare not suspect, not to be thus Ordained, should notwithstanding these sacred Obligations, seem, even to Print, to Glory, that he never took the Oath of Canonical Obedience; which is, to obey his Ordinary in all honest and lawful things.

Thus for the Ministers: and for the People, were they not generally Baptized by the Ministers, and according to the Order, and in the Publick places of the Church of England? Have they not since, given their Consent, as Members, by their publick attendance upon the Worship of the Church of England? Have they not generally owned,

for a considerable time together, some many years, that *relation* to their particular Churches and *Pastors*? Is all this nothing to signify their *Union* with our Church, and *Obligation* to her Government? Is it nothing in our *Authors* Judgement? I cannot believe it; I am sure 'tis something in Mr. *Baxters* Opinion, as I shall shew anon.

But *wherein* are we obliged to obey our *Governours* as we are *Members* of the Church of *England*? The *measure* of this Obedience, are the *Laws* and *Canons* and the *Rubrick* in the *Liturgy*: and the main Scope and intention of *all* these, is to direct you how you are to *Worship* God in our *Parochial Assemblies*; as also, to demean your selves in all *due Reverence* to your *Superiours*, and *Bretherly love* and fellowship together, as *Members* of the *same Body*, the *Church of England*.

And to dissolve or *renounce this* our Communion with our *Brethren* (as well as with *Governours*) in those *Assemblies*, and in that *Worship*, is so far to renounce that *Communion* which we owe, and is due from us all to the *Church of England*; and is that thing, which is deservedly branded with the black Name of *Schisme from the Church of England*: (which is the other Branch of that Schisme before mentioned) especially, if the *Detractors* proceed to the *Erecting of Anti-Churches*,

ches, as Mr. Baxter properly calls them.

For our several *Parochial Assemblies*, are *Parts* and *Members* of the *Great Body* of our Church, into which, the Church is *divided* for our Convenient *Worshiping* of God, (as you heard in the *Definition*) wherein, all *individual persons* are bound to attend upon Gods Worship according to the foreaid *Rules*, quatenus *Members* of this Church of *England*.

But I shall have an occasion to speak largely, of Schisme from *particular Congregations*, in another place; and at present, would fain hope, that some thing hath been said to shew what *Schisme from the Church of England* is.

This is the Sum. *Schisme from the Church of England* is a sinful dividing from Her, in Her *Governours*, *Members*, *Worship* or *Assemblies*. Which, and much more is done by those that despise her *Government*, renounce her *Worship* and *Communion* with Her *Members* in the *Publick* places of it; and Erect *New Congregations* for a new manner of *Worship* and *Discipline*, under other *Governours*, in opposition thereunto; according to the *Laudable* practises now on foot.

By this time, I hope, my *Answerer* sees, after his long and ranging Scrutiny for the discovery of this *Schism*, and all in vain,

how pertinently he demands, p. 38. *Is every difference, in things unnecessary, from the Major part, a Schism from them?*

Again, p. 39. 'Tis our disobedience to the Church that is our Schism. This he saies, and then quickly wipes it off, with his own pleasant Answer; But Fidelity to our King commandeth the disowning of Usurpers. But I might spoil his Mirth, should I examine his meaning.

Again, p. 40. he cries out; *Whoever took any Act of Disobedience in a Circumstance to be a Schism?*

But, in earnest, had not these little frisks and extravagancies been happily prevented, had he heeded me at first? is a sinful dividing from the Church, in Her Government and Worship, and setting up Churches in opposition to Her, in both, is this no more than a difference in things unnecessary from the Major part, or than a bare Act of Disobedience in a Circumstance? I know you will not say it: and 'tis vain to say, that you intend no more: I wrote against those that do.

What has he more to Answer? Why, the Schism I mention, p. 39. is not such as Martin and Gildas made? what then? if it be worse, it is not such. You should rather have compar'd your Brethren in this new Worke, to the other Martin, called Mar-Prelate.

But

But this *Martin*, you say, Renounced Communion with the Bishops and their Synods (all his life) who had prosecuted the Prissillianists with the Secular Sword : and *Gildas* pronounced him no excellent Christian that called the Brittish Clergy in his time, Priests or Ministers, and not Traitors, as he did himself : yet neither of these holy men are called Separatists or Schismatics.

What follows ? might they not be *Schismatics*, though they were not called so ? You will find some advantage by the Argument, for I have not called *you* so, yet. Perhaps *Gildas* might be bold with his Brethren, and call them *Traitors* ; but if unjustly, 'twas ill done, though no *Schisme*. If justly ; there may be *Proditores* found of your acquaintance too, I make no doubt ; though, if you do not urge me much, I shall not call them so. You do not think that time is returned upon us, and that he hath not the *Character* of an excellent Christian, that hath not the *gift*, of calling the *Priests Traitors*.

So much for *Gildas* : But for his Companion *Martin*, I might have given him *Courser Entertainment*, had it not been for the kindness of *Another Gildas*, that not long since, spake more in his favour, than *you* do now.

His words, on his behalf, are these ; *I have told you in the story of Martin, how he sepe-*

Baxters rated from the Synods of those Individuals Defence, al Bishops ; and from their Local P. 76. *Communion without Separation from the Office, the Churches, or any other Bishop:* And then for ought I know Martin might be a good honest fellow. Do you all the rest, that he did, and by my consent, you should be excused from sitting in Synods.

For Martin it seems denied not *Communion* with the *Churches*; much less set up an *Altar* and *Church* of his own in opposition to them : If he had done so, I would have said he had been a *Rank Schismatick*, though I spare you.

It is confess that the *Presbyterians* do generally agree, that the *Disciplinary* part, or *Form of Government*, is not *Essential* to a *National Church*; yet they affirm, that the *Verity* of a *Natioanal Church*, consists in its *Agreement* in the same *Doctrine* and *Worship*: and consequently, though *differences* in *Doctrine* are not, yet a *breach* of its *Unity*, and making *divisions* in a point of *Worship*, is a plain *Schisme* from a *National Church* according to the *Principles* of the *Presbyterians*. Mr. Cawdrey spake not his own peculiar opinion, when he said, p. 178. *I believe those men, that raise differences in a Reformatory Church, he meant this National Church, and per-*

*Vid. Cawdry In-
depend. Schisme,
page 172, 173.*

persist in keeping open those Divisions, Separating also into other new Churches; doe as well deserve the name of Schismaticks, as those that make differences, in one Particular Church.

Upon the whole, then, you perceive how aptly you ask, p. 42. Whether a Minister may not remove from one Parish to another; or any man remove his dwelling into another Parish, &c. and be no Schismarick? an old objection of Dr. Owens, and answered by Mr. Cawdry: that they removed to Churches of the same Constitution; a thing never questioned, but alwaies allowed, both by the Union and Custome of this National Church.

Again, and alike pertinently you ask, Whether a Separation of one Parish from another be Schism? or whether I mean by it, a Local Separation only, as you gravely enquire, p. 33. Or, whether little differences in the modes of Worship, particularly, in the manner of the Ministers Prayer (and he should have added, in dividing his Text) be Schism? but he prevents my Answer, by denying these himself. Those that differ thus, he saith, and thereby doubtless very wisely and to general Satisfaction determineth; these, saith he, p. 34. are not Separated Churches, any otherwise than Local, and in such Modal Differences.

Thus, what the Church of England, and

what Schism from it, is. But at the beginning of the discourse, 'twas hinted; that if we would consider the *Church of England*, not *organise* but *entitative*, as some speak; that is, as it is a part or member of the *Universal visible Church*; even in this consideration of it, Separation and the present practice of gathering Churches, is a Schism in the *Church of England*, if not so from it. And by those *intestine Ruptures* and rents it is causing in the midst of her, gives her too much cause to complain; *O my Bowels, my Bowels!* While it tears in pieces her *Old and Stated Congregations*; tramples upon her *Liturgy*; defies her *Worship*; renounceth her *Pastors*; throws down all her ancient *Land-marks* and, laudable *bounds* of her particular Churches; and endeavours every where to Erect new *Altars* and *Separate Churches* that were never before heard of in the Christian world, but amongst wild and desperate and Schismatical *Sectaries*.

But, this will meet us in the next Chapter, when we speak of Schism from particular Congregations.

CHAP. IX.

Gathering Churches, a Schisme from particular Parochial Churches. The general Nature of Schism.

The present practice of *Gathering Churches*, is not only a *Schism* from the Church of *England*, but a *Schism* also from our particular *Parochial Congregations*.

This comes now to be evine'd; and I shall take my advantage for the doing of it, from an Observation of Mr. Cawdry against Dr. Owen, and the Independents. There was, saith great Schis. he, and is, another Church-State in p. 177. England in our particular Churches: from these, also, they have most of them, as once of them, (or, they had been once of them) Palpably Separated.

I am now to charge the present practice, of our *New Church gatherers*, and their *New Churches*, with the like *Schism*, from particular *Parochial Churches*, whereof they are, or lately were, Members, and ought so to have continued.

To cut our work as short as may be; I shall confine my strength within one Argument; which I conceive the clearest, and most

most likely to put an end to the matter in debate; and 'tis taken from the nature and definition of *Schism*: wherein we shall shew, what we are to understand by Schism; and how the present gathering of *Churches* out of our *Churches* agrees with it; not doubting, but then, the conclusion will find its own way well enough.

What is *Schism* then? I shall give you the easiest and the least controverted definition of it; and such, as was never excepted against by any *Presbyterian* that I ever heard of: 'Tis this; Schism is a *causless*, or as others, a *voluntary, unwarrantable separation from a true Church*.

Here are two parts to be considered in the general; separation from a true Church; and the formal, special and distinguishing part of it, coucht in the words *causless*, or *unwarrantable and voluntary*.

I. *Schism is a separation from a true Church*; it is so, in the proper and peculiar notation of it: the word *χίσμα*, *Schism*, ^{cap. de} is a stranger to *prophane Authors*, *Schis.* and the *Old Testament*, and is only to be found in the *New Testament*; so that it only intends something about the *Christian Church*; and what that is, must be understood by the *New Testament*, and *Ecclesiastical*

fiaistical Writers, who have taken it thence.

It is commonly affirmed, that in the *Scripture-use* of it, it sometimes signifies *division* among Christians in *opinion* only: but I have observed, that usually those *opinions*, were such as had a tendency to *divisions in practice*, as I am of *Paul, &c.* but 'tis generally acknowledged that differences in *practice*, especially touching *Divine Worship* (whether from the signification of the word, which is properly a *rent* or *divilion*, or whether from the more frequent *use* of it *that way* in *Scripture*, or for some *other reason*) I say, difference in *pratice* about *Divine Worship*, hath long since obtained and appropriated to it self the name of Schism.

Sometimes such *division in the Church*, when there hath been no *actual separation* from the Church, is conceived to be called Schism in *Scripture*. *I Cor. i. 10.*

And this notion exclusive of all other kind of Schism in *Scripture*, Dr. *Owen* espoused, contrary both to *Scripture reason*, and the general apprehension of the *Ancient and Modern Divines*, as Mr. *Cawdrey* hath sufficiently argued.

Separation from a Church is a more *obvious division*, and consequently a more *notorious kind* of Schism; and it seems more reasonable

able to argue, if the Holy Ghost called the first buds and beginnings of separation, by the name of *Schism*, it was to deter the dividers from the sin in its ripeness and accused fruits, which more bairnously merited than black title; as our Saviour calls lust, adultery. *Schisma separat ab Ecclesia*; Schism separates from the Church, faith St. Hierom.

To proceed, this separation from the Church, as a learned *Presbyterian* asserteth, is from the Church as *Catholick*, which he calls *Donatism*, or from a particular Church; and that, faith he, is properly Separatism.

Lastly, this Schismatical separation is *negative* or *positive*; the former is *on de Schis*. By *simplex secessio*, when men do peaceably and quietly withdraw their communion from the Church, in part or in whole, to enjoy their consciences in a *private* way. The other, called *positive* separation, is when persons *thus withdrawn*; do gather into a distinct and opposite body, setting up a Church against a Church, to worship God in a separated way themselves; which St. Augustine calls, a setting up *Altar* against *King.16.* *Altar*; alluding to that act of King *Abaz*, in setting up an *Altar* of his own making, after the *fashion* of that which he saw at *Damascus*, besides the *Lord's Altar*. And

Churches Sinful. 61

And this is it, saith Cameron. and most that write upon the point, which in a peculiar manner, and by way of eminency is, and deserves to be called by the name of Schism.

Thus we see, that gathering our selves into new Churches, is the complement and perfection of Schism; the very *Apex & extrema Schismatis linea*, as Cameron speaks.

This evil, as I lately hinted, hath its beginnings, and usually goes on by degrees to this perfection. In the Church of Corinth, it first began with a *faulious esteeming* of one Minister above another: One faith, *I am of Paul, &c.* at length it came to *ζητεοντες την αρχην*. Which Mr. Baxter renders *emulation, strife* *P. 2.* and separation, or factions, or dividing into several parties. This appeared somewhat higher, *Chap. 11.* for they would not eat their Love-Feasts, and *Parens* thinks, they would not eat the Lord's Supper together; but those that were for *Paul* would communicate among themselves; so those that were for *Apollos*, and those that were for *Peter*.

And though they did not gather themselves into staled Congregations, or absolutely separate into several Churches, (for they came together, though to little purpose) yet their divisions are not

only

only called Schism, but a despising the Church
of God.

But if this progress of Schism was so smartly rebuked, we may the less wonder to find the Apostles so very severe against the Gnosticks, and those more perfected Schismatics, that afterwards drew Disciples after them wholly from the Church, and made false Apostles and Anti-Churches. *anod. vi. l. 11. c. 1. v. 1.*
Decumanius. extra terminos Ecclesiæ educentes,
Clem. Alex. segregantes fideles a fidelibus, and making distinct and seperate, and opposite parties and meetings for the withdrawal of ship of God. Mr. Hale observes these Schism, two things make Schism compleat, the p. 3. chasing of a Bishop in opposition to the former, a thing very frequent among the Ancients, and which many times was the cause and effect of Schism; and then the erecting of a new Church for the dividing parts to meet in publickly, and this he calls Ecclesiastical sedition; and Ames, peccatum gravissimum; a most grievous sin, both in its nature and effects: For Division, so far as it proceeds, whether in Natural, Civil, or Ecclesiastical Bodies, is the dissolution and destruction of it.

CHAP. X.

The differencing Nature of Schism. The Answerers Objections answered; especially the Preaching of the ejected Ministers.

I Will suppose, we are agreed that the general nature of Schism is such a separation from a true Church as we have shew'd; but to make it *unlawful*, and to merit the evil and usual sense of the word, it must be *causless, unwarrantable*, and as Mr. Hales term is, *unnecessary*; when it is so, is to be carefully stated: for this indeed is the *punctum difficultatis*, and the very hinge upon which this *controversie* turns.

Herein, that I may prepare to argue with due closeness, I shall continue to aim at the sense of *Presbyterians*: And as I have before I shall here also follow the steps of Mr. Brinsley, late Minister of Tarmouth, not only because his Book of Schism seems to me judicious, and exact as to our point: and he therein follow so excellent a person as Cameron. but likewise for that he was an eminent *Non-conformist* (as a Minister only) for I have been well informed, that though he ceased preaching at Bartholomew, 1662.

yet

yet he kept no *private* meetings, but ordinarily attended on the *publick* worship, in the place where he lived: besides, his Book was licensed by Mr. Cranford, with a sufficient commendation; and was Preacht and Printed in the *Presbyterian Service* against the *Sectaries*; and no doubt, his Brethren of that *perswasion* did then heartily concur with him in the point.

This Mr. Brinsley, p. 34, 35. states the matter thus; Separation is *unwarrantable*, either for the ground or manner; the former an *unjust*, the latter a *rash* separation, each a *Schism*; wherein he follows Cameron.

I shall vary his *method* a little, but keep close to his sense; and then an *unjust separation* is two-fold; either when there is *no cause*, and it is absolutely *causless*; or when the cause is *light*, and not sufficient to warrant it. *Separation is rash*, when there being cause supposed sufficient, yet it is done in an *undue manner*.

1. Separation is *unjust*, when it is *without cause* given by the Church; and as he enlargeth, "When there is no Persecution, no " spreading Error or Heresie, no Idolatry, no " Superstition maintained or practised, but " the Church is *peaceable and pure*, and that " both for *Doctrine and Worship*; and in a
" good

"good measure free from scandals (which no
"Church ever wholly was) now in such a case
"to seperate, is an unjust seperation, and
"Schism.

If this be indeed the state of the case, whether the parties think they have cause to seperate or not, I think it is not much material, except to aggravate their crime: For, if they think they have cause, they are plain Separatists; and if they do not think so, and yet divide the Church by a seperation causeless, in their own opinion as well as truth, they are far worse. Neither will any wantonness of spirit of this kind, though boy'd up by a distaste taken at our Guides, or an higher esteem of other Teachers, or pretences of greater purity, much less an ill will to the state of the Church from which we shall thus seperate, admit an excuse from any sober and wise man.

2. There may be some causes of offence given us by our Church, but they such, as may by no meanes warrant a seperation: cause of offence is not always cause of separation; which our Author calls a light cause. He enlargeth; "Possibly some slight opposition, or persecution, it may be, by some small pecuniary Mulcts; some lesser errors in Doctrine, not fundamental, nor near the foundation; some corruptions in or about

"the worship of God , but those not *desirous*
 "active to the Ordinances ; being not in *sub-*
 "stance , but in *ceremony* ; and those such as
 "the person offended is not enforced to be
 "active in ; scandals few , and those *only toler-*
 "rated , not allowed . All tolerable evils ,
 "such as *charity* may well bear with ; this
 "ground is not sufficient to *bear* a separation .
 You see he is full and particular ; and in all
 this , I believe he referred in his thoughts to
 the state of our Church heretofore , as in the
 former he struck at the Popish .

The learned *Amesius* , whose Principles
 were somewhat *Congregational* , hath said
 much to the same purpose in a few
 Cas. do. words . *Separation from a true Church*
Schism. is sometimes lawful , if one cannot re-
 main in its communion , sine communione
 in peccatis , without communicating
 in her sins : if there be manifest danger of
 seduction , and if we are compell'd to depart
 by oppression and persecution . Thus he . And
 we may suppose he thought he made a full
 enumeration of all the just causes of departing
 from a true Church ; and that in any
 other case separation was unlawful .

Others indeed have more *compendiously*
 and fully drawn all the rules in this case into
 one point , Separation is *unwarrantable* , if
 communion with the Church may be with-
 out

out sin. And indeed what can justify a practice so contrary to love and peace, and of so dangerous consequence, but the avoiding of sin? Our general Answer to the charge of *Schism* by the *Papists* is, we must not partake with your sins; and I think all parties consent in this *common proposition*, where the conditions of communion with a Church are sinful, we are not bound to that communion, for we must obey God rather than man.

I am sure this was current Doctrine with the Non-conformists, called *Puritans* heretofore, in the defence of communion with the Church of England. "Let the abuses (saith Mr. Ball) be many or great, yet if I may be present at the true worship of God without sin, (consent unto, or approbation of such abuses or corruptions) in voluntary separation, I sin against God, his Church, and mine own soul.

This was also undoubted by the late *Presbyterians*; in stead of many, let Mr. Cawdrey against Dr. Owen Independ. a be heard, for methinks he speaks to the purpose. It is (saith he) no duty of Christ's imposing, no priviledg of his purchasing, either to deprive a man's self of his Ordinances for other mens sins; or to set up a new Church in opposition to a true

His Defence,
2. Par. 22.

Church, as no Church rightly constituted for want of some reformation in lesser matters. And Mr. Corbet, and the Author of Evangelical Peace and Unity, if I understand him, puts the whole debate upon the same issue with us. So Bagshaw also, &c.

Among these light causes, which will by no means warrant a separation, *Cure of Church Divisions*, 291. Mr. Baxter hath laboured to throw down these four Superstitions, as he calls them, which some religious people have brought up.

1. "That we are guilty of the sins of all "unworthy communicants, if we communicate "with them, though their admission is not by "our fault.

2. "That he whose judgement is against "a Diocesan Church, may not lawfully join "with a Parish Church, if the Minister be "but subject to the Diocesan.

3. "That whatsoever is See *Cure of Church Divisions*, p. 194. "unlawfully commanded, is "not lawful to be obeyed.

4. "That it is unlawful to do any thing "in the Worship of God which is imposed "by men, and is not commanded it self in the "Scripture.

But enough of the false grounds of separation that render it *causless*; for that they are either really none, or else light or insufficient.

The

The Second Exception against Separation was taken from the undue manner of proceeding in it, for which it is termed *Rash*; and therefore Schismatical; though the ground be just. That is, as Mr. Brinsley explaineth himself, p 25. ‘When it is sudden and heady: ‘without due endeavour and expectance of Reformation in the Church: it is then *Rash*, ‘and consequently an unwarrantable Separation, in as much as it is opposite to *Charity*.

Mr. Baxters Advice is excellent here: ‘If Corruptions blemish and dishonour the Congregation; doe not say (let sin alone; I must not oppose it for fear of *Division*) but be the forwardest to reduce all to the will of God. And yet, if you cannot prevail, as you desire; be the backwardest to Divide and Separate; and do it not, without a certain Warrant, and extream necessity. Resolve with *Augustine*, I will not be the Chaff, and yet I will not go out of the Floor, though the Chaff be there. Never give over your just desire and endeavour of Reformation; and yet as long as you can possible avoid it, forsake not the Church, which you desire to Reform. As *Paul* said, to them that were to forsake a Sea-wrack’d Vessel, If these abide not in the Ship, ye cannot be saved. Many a one, by unlawful flying, and shifting for his

Cure of
Church Div.
p. 80.

'own greater Peace and Safety, doth much
'more hazard his own and others.

3. Ames gives me occasion to hint one thing more : *Secessio vero Totalis, &c.* A Total Secession or Separation with absolute renouncing or rejecting all Communion, cannot be lawfully practiced towards a True Church : but partial only, quatenus Communio, so far as Communion cannot be exercised without sin. Cas. de Schis. 307.

I Wish heartily, my Brethren would consider, whether not only renouncing all Communion with, but setting up other Churches against our Churches, be not, in his sense, a Total Separation; and consequently Sinful. Or whether you, that so use us, do yet retain Communion with our Parish-Churches so far as you know you may without sin. But this by the way :

The Summe is, when the Church gives no such cause of offence, as may justify Separation ; when the Conditions of her Communion require nothing of her Members, whereby if they Communicate, they shall be Actual Sinners; when persons, let the cause be never so just, shall unadvisedly, without due endeavours and patient expectation of a Reformation: lastly, when they shall for some few things, at which they take offence, totally forsake Communion with a True Church, and gather them-

themselves into *Anti-Churches*; they are, in all these Cases, guilty of *Schisme*, in the judgment of the most *Non-Conformists*, of all sorts; and, indeed, of all men, that have considered the Point and the Nature of Schism. The *Assumption*, we shall make hereafter--- and at present, only take notice of what the *Answerer* hath said to prevent it.

He gives us, p. 16, 17. eight *Differences*, betwixt the *Old Separatists* and the *Present Non-Conformists*; and then concludes in all these, they differ from *Separatists*, though they gather *Churches*. These differences are particularly considered hereafter. The first three of these Differences, are a *Complement* to us and our *Parishes*: the four next, are a *Complement* to themselves: in the last, I think, he is in earnest for himself, but he hath to do with a *headstrong party*, that will not obey, either his *Word* or *Example*, in desiring nothing more, than with *Love and Concord*, to carry on with us the same work of *Christ*. But what is all this, to excuse them from being *Separatists*, that run away from us, and draw *Disciples* after them: that refuse (I am sure in fact, what ever some may say) the least *Communion* with us, in our publick *Assemblies*, and gather *New Churches* for themselves out of them.

This they do, though you know we, generally, have not given them *Cause* to do it: And

F 4 they

they do it *Rashly*, and *Totally*, and all your little devices, will never alter the Nature of things, or excuse it from gross *Schism* in the Judgment of all that were not *Separatists*, and spake their mind, before the present Temptation dazled mens eyes.

'Tis in vain to flie to your *Common Refuge*; the strength of this Argument will not suffer you to be quiet in it ; who ever before you made this a *warrantable ground of Separation*, that they might *Serve God better* ? if finding *positive faults* in our worship, would not excuse them heretofore ; much less will *negative ones* excuse you from Separation. But they thought those were faults and *just Causes* of Separation which were *not* true, and they were mistaken : but yet, they had more to say for themselves , it seems , than you have, who do the *same things*, without alledging so *much ground*, and think to be wholly free, from the *same charge*.

Sir, *Schism* consists in *practice* ; and whatever you think on't, or, however you would palliate the matter, where that *practice* that truly answers the *definition of Schism* is found, it will be *Schism* do what you can. Is there any *Institution* of Christ, that they must gather *Churches* out of *true Churches*, to make a *purer Church*? Ans. Mr. Cawdrey *Indep.* p. 198.

But I prevent my design : *Schism*, we have shewed

shewed is a *causeless unwarrantable Separation*, and 'tis true; and so my *Answerer* might have understood me, and his *Brethren*, in my *Last*: I spake in the language of the *Presbyterians*, and a little *Candour*, would have supposed that both, I and they, intended by gathering *Churches* out of *Churches*, such as was *causeless, unwarrantable and unnecessary*; for that, they were still ready, if need required, to prove the *Independant Separation* such; as I shall be, anon, to do yours.

It is, therefore, some trouble to me to hear you ask, as if somthing of Argument were lodg'd in it; *Whether a persons removal from one Parish to another to inhabit there, were Schism?* p. 48. and yet I conceive, you have it more than twice over in your book. You ask again, must no *Churches* be gathered out of *Rome*? I fear not many for you: but for a full and plain answer to this, I remit you to Mr. *Baxters Cure of Church Divisions*, p. 81, 82, 83. Which if it seem not plain and full to you, it is because you understand not *Christian Sense and Reason*.

Again, p. 44. did not the *Parliament* take a *Church out of a Church* when they seperated *Covent-Garden* from *Martins Parish*? doubtless, 'twas either with cause or not; 'twas warrantable or not; 'twas necessary or not: but the jest is spoiled, if it were a *Church* of the same *Constitution*, with consent of the persons concern'd & by lawful Authority. Had

Had you no place to argue Schismatical but Covent-garden; I would advise you, as a friend, to take a little more heed what you say about that place, for fear of one of those Schismatics which in other places, you honor, as Usurers, concern'd in your next Section.

But behold the *Man at Arms* fully Accoutré, without all fear, but a great deal of wit and courage makes a challenge to the *factious Disputers*, as his *Catholick language* is: and 'tis this, as you may read it under his own hand.

Obj. I undertake, saith he, to prove, that Dr. Manton Dr. Seaman, &c. with the People subject to them, as *Pastors*, were true Churches. Prove you, if you can, that on Aug. 24 62. they were degraded, and these Churches were dissolved in any reason, which any Churches for 600. years after Christ, would. If not, you seem your self to accuse their Successors of Schism, for drawing part of the people from them merely by the Advantage of having the Temples and Tythes, and so gathering Churches out of true Churches.

Ans. A Marvellous Undertaker! he will undertake to prove one Proposition, and let the rest shift for them selves.

Dr. Manton and Dr. Seaman, and their People were true Churches: and this he will prove: but what if a man should venture to disappoint him, and not deny it?

Again;

Again; prove if you can, that these *Pastors* were degraded, and these *Churches* dissolved Aug. 24. 62.

But what if a man has a mind to be friends with him here too? and should grant that those Ministers were not degraded then, but only ejected and inhibited the exercise of their Ministry within the *Church of England*: and that those *Churches* were not dissolv'd by having *New Pastors*; no more, than the Kingdom when the King dies. And yet, certainly the King and People, are as much the Constitutive parts of a Kingdom; as *Pastor* and *People* of a *Church*.

Who will say, that considers what he saith, that a particular *Church* is dissolved by the death or removal of the *Pastor*. The *River* is the *Same*, though the *Lands* on each side, change their *Proprietors*.

But what then? Suppose all this be quietly granted him, what then? then, those that succeeded them are *Schismaticks*; or you seem to accuse them of *Schism*: how so? for drawing away part of the people from them. Whither? to another manner of Worship which the *Laws* required; and which, the *Ejected* refused.

But how did they draw the People? by doing their *duty* in the *Temples*, as by good Authority Instituted and Inducted thereunto. In-

stitu-

stinted as Pastors to have the Cure of Souls; and Inducted into the Temples and Tythes.

But lastly, why do you say they drew a part of the people onely, and not the whole?

Ought not the whole, worship God undivided, and with one accord in the Temples? or must the place be removed with the Pastor? I quire not who made the difference, but I know who makes the Division, let them answer it how they can, to God and the King, the Church and their Successors.

Those Pastors were Ejected out of the Temples by lawful Authority: the People are bound to worship God in the Temple, as they have opportunity; and no where else, in opposition to the publick Worship: (the Consequence here, I think may vie with yours above) therefore, these Pastors had no opportunity to exercise their Pastoral Office to those People; and where there is no opportunity, there is no duty; in Mr. Baxters Divinity, Second Admon. to Bagsh. 96.

But you say, you must Preach, the Reverend Dr. Gouge saith, No! 'The Inhibition of Idolators and Infidels made simply against preaching of the Gospel, because they would have it utterly Suppreffed in this case, he saith, no sufficient inhibition to bind the Conscience; it is directly and apparent-

ly contrary to Gods Word. But when *Christian Magistrates* inhibit Ministers to Preach, it is because they think them unfit and unmeet, either for some notorious Crimes, or for some Erronious Opinions, to exercise their Ministerial Functions. In these Cases, Such as are so inhibited, so far forth as they are inhibited, *Ought not to Preach.* Neither are particular and private men (much less the parties inhibited) to Judge of the Cause of the inhibition, whether it be just or unjust: but as they who are appointed by the present Government, to Ordain Ministers, are to judg of their fitness thereunto; so likewise, of their unfitness.

I have thought hitherto, that distinction of the Office, and of the exercise of that Office, had gone uncontroled among Presbyterians: and that, though the Ministers of Christ depend not, even upon the *Christian Magistrate* for their Office; and he cannot degrade them: yet *quoad Exercitium*, as to the Exercise of it, within his Dominions, they did; and that he had power to Silence such as he Judged unmeet to Preach.

Mr. Baxter doth much encourage me to persist in the same Opinion, more than once. *The Authority of the King and law-
ful Magistrates*, saith Mr. Baxter,
2d Admon.
to Bag. 117
is more about the Circumstantial of
Worship

Worship (as whether *Abiathar* shall be High Priest, &c.) then the False Teachers were about that Doctrine.

He, more than Intimates, that the Magistrates Power extends to the Appointing who shall be High Priest; and who doubt, but that he hath equal power to appoint who shall be *Pastor* of *Covent-Garden*.

Again, hear Mr. *Baxter* what he saith, more largely upon the Point. *Disput.* 223.
‘Doubtless the Magistrate himself hath so much Authority in Ecclesiastical Affairs, that if he Command a qualified person to Preach the Gospel, and Command the People to receive him; I see not, how either of them can be allowed to disobey him; (though yet the Party ought to have recourse also to *Pastors* for Ordination, and People for Consent where it may be done) And *Grötius* commendeth the saying of *Musculus*, That, he would have no Minister question his Call, that being qualified, hath the Christian Magistrates Commission. And though this Assertion need some limitation; yet it is apparent, that the Magistrates Power is great about the Offices of the Church.

‘For *Solomon*, put out *Abiathar* from the Priest-hood, and put *Zadock* in his place, King. 2. 27, 35. *David* and the Captains

tains of the Host, Separated to Gods Service, those of the Sons of *Asaph* and of *Heman* and *Jeduthur*, who should Prophesie with *Harps*, &c. 1 Chron. 16. 4. And so did *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 8. 14, 15. They were for the Service of the House of God, according to the Kings Order, 1 Chron. 25. 1, 6. And methinks those those men should acknowledge this, that were wont to stile the King, in all Causes and over all Persons, the Supreme Head and Governor. So far He.

And indeed I durst almost challenge this Answerer, or any man, to prove; that ever any learned Protestant in this Church, whether *Episcopal* or *Presbyterian*, did make it a question, (I mean before the Kings happy Return) whether *Solomon* had not sufficient Authority to put out *Abiathar* from the Priest-hood, and put *Zadock* in his place. Or whether any might modestly say such must Preach, and that those were *Schismatics* and *Usurpers* that did exercise their Offices according to Law, in the places of such as were removed, by the Vertue of an *Act of Parliament* of unquestionable Authority, and we must Preach though the Law forbids us.

As for Dr. *Gunnings*, Dr. *Wilds* preaching fourteen or fifteen years ago, which you

so

so often hint at, it is sufficiently known, it was in such a time, when the *Case* was far *otherwise*, both with the *Church* and *State*, in many *Notorious Circumstances*: both as to *Persons*, *Law*, *Government* and *Worship*; and they could easily answer their so doing, if it be not a matter too much *below* the Eminency both of their *Persons* and *Places*. We must proceed:

C H A P. XI.

Provision for the proof of the Assumption, by four Propositions.

THAT Schism is a *Causeless Separation* from a *True Church*: and what Separation from a True Church is, and when it is Causeless, hath at large appeared. And there seems nothing left to prevent or remove the charge of *Schism* from the *Practices* we oppose; but to plead, either that our Churches are no *true* Churches; or that you are not *of them*, and *ow* them no *Communion*; or that you do not *Separate* from them: or if you do, you have *Cause sufficient*, and your Separation is not *Rash* or *Groundless*.

That the *Contrary* to all these, is the *very Truth*, I am now to manifest. The *Propositions* accordingly, are these four:

Pro. 1. That our Parochial Congregations are true Churches.

2. That the people of England are, or ought to be, members of our Parochial Congregations.

3. That the present practice of gathering Churches out of them, is Separation.

4. That such Separation is Rash, and without just grounds.

And all these shall be proved, not only from the Nature of the things, and the judgment of others: but from the Publicke judgement of the former Non-Conformists and Presbyterians; and then I hope my bold undertaking will be found excusable.

CHAP. XII.

Parochial Congregations true Churches. His Exceptions, especially about parish bounds, examined.

First, I affirm that our Parochial Congregations are true Churches.

They have the matter of true Churches. Professed Christians, Baptized. They have the form of true Churches, being Societies of such, as Ames saith, in order to the worship of God: and these fix'd and Stated, and ordinarily assembling actually together for that end.

According to our *Author*, they have, generally, both the *Essential*, and constituent parts of true Churches; *Pastors* to govern, and *people* to be govern'd by them, in order to Gods glory, and their Salvation.

And as their end, so the *means*, and their *work* in their *publick Assemblies*, is such as is proper and peculiar unto, and *true*, and undoubted *indications* and *notes* of true Churches; the *Ordinances* of God, and their ordinary *attendance* thereupon, in known, *publique*, and *fixed places*, consecrated, and set apart for that end. Wherein, also, there is nothing *practic'd*, much less *allow'd*, that is *contrary* to these *means*, or doth *pervert* that *end*; or with any pretence, or colour of reason, can be thought to *destroy* their *being*, or their *truth*, as *Churches* of God.

For this we have abundant Suffrage voluntarily given by Non-Conformity it self, from time to time, and that not only in the acknowledgement, but even in the *defence* of them against their *enemies* of the *Separation*: and what need more. If Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Hildersham* of old, and Mr. *Bagshaw*, and his friend, the *Answerer*, be heard for the rest.

Mr. *Ball* is express for himself, and his Brethren: 'The Non-Conformists, saith he, 'can not only acknowledg, but prove the

Reli-

Religion and worship of the *Church of Eng-*
land to be of God; not by per-
Ansf. to Can. *ty reasons,* and colourable
part. 2. p. 3. *shews, (which they leave to*
them which maintain a bad Cause) but
by pregnant evidence from the word of Truth,
even by plain Texts of Scripture, and sound
reason deduced therefrom, against which the
Gates of Hell shall never prevail.

Mr. *Hilderſham* comes not a whit be-
hind him : ‘There is nothing
On John 4. done, saith he, in Gods publick
p. 3 *worship among us, but it is done*
by the Institution, and Ordinance, and Com-
mendment of the Lord, as he very indu-
strially and learnedly proves, by an enumera-
tion of the particulars of our worship, and
thence presseth the people, not only to at-
tend it, but to come to the beginning of
it.

Mr. *Bagshaw* himself acknowledgeth the
same : And therefore pleads, that
Antidote *they do not seperate, but forbear*
p. 6. *Communion, because of some condi-*
tions required; and so indeed doth Doctor
Owen, and all sober Independents; and there-
fore I need not obſerve, that those eminent
Presbyterians, that wrote the Epistle before
*Mr. *Balls* Answer to *Cann*, did own; or, that*
*Mr. *Cawdry*, and other Presbyterians, have*

made it the foundation of all their Arguments against Independent gathering Churches, that our Churches, were true Churches.

Our Author doth not so much as question the truth of our Churches in General : what exceptions notwithstanding he hath scattered about it, we shall briefly examine.

Object. 1. Page 10. He tells us, like an Oracle, among the rest of their Purposes and Desires, which are not a few, and they none of the best, that the Non-Conformists think, that a Parish, quatenus, a Parish, is not a Church : nor a Parishioner, as such, a Church-Member.

Well, and who ever said they thought otherwise? in some things, it seems, they think, as others do. Yet we know, and they ought to think at least, that a Company of Christians living within Parish bounds, and ordinarily attending upon Gods publick worship, in the place set a part to that end, are a Church.

Object. 2. But they think also, that Parish bounds of Churches are of Humane prudential Constitution, and not of Divine Institution, or unchangeable,

But pray think again; for you ought to think, that co-habitation of the Members of

a Parochial Church is according to the Law of Nature, and so Divine: and that persons, whom Providence hath so placed together, are bound to worship God together in some publick way; by vertue of the Law of Natural Religion, as much as Families among themselves; were there no other institution of God or man in the case.

Moreover, they ought to think, that co-habitation of Church members is so far of Divine Institution, as the Examples of Churches in Scripture, alwaies so bounded, amount to Divine Institution. Which is almost as much, as is usually urged for the Divine Institution of the Lords day. This was the current Argument of the Presbyterians heretofore, against the attempts of Independents to break these bounds, and to glean up members in others fields, no matter what distance, to make up their Churches.

Cawdrey Schys pag. *ches and Cities in the Scripture, are commensurate.* Was not the Church of Jerusalem and Corinth, so called from the places.

They ought, further to think, that the bounds of such parochial Churches, were laid in Reason, and Scripture examples: though Ours were actually divided, long since: and that our Parish bounds, in the general intention and scope of those that first

26 Non-Conformists New

appointed them ; notwithstanding *some errors* which will alwayes happen in such publick cases) were made, upon the said reasonable and *Scripture* ground of *co-habitation*.

They ought, also, to *think*, that though *Prudence* at first discerned these *grounds*, and accordingly set these *bounds* of parish *Churches*; yet, it was not the prudence of the *People*, but their *Governours* : who have not now left it in the *peoples liberty or prudence*, whether they will ordinarily *keep these bounds or not*. But have also bounded that *vulgar extravagancy* by the *Laws* both of *Church* and *State* to the contrary :

Yet again, they ought to *think*, that they owe *obedience* to their *Governors* in these *laws*; which *obedience* is certainly of *Divine Institution*, though I can hardly find it in *all your Books*.

You ought, lastly, to *think*, of the *fearfull consequences* of *tearing* these *hedges* and *ancient bounds*, and thereby making *inlets*, or *outlets*, or *both*, to all kind of *licentiousness* in Religion, and *confusion* in the *Church*; while you thus expose *parochial Congregations* to the *direclest means* of their *dissolution*.

O that you would lay to heart those *serious words* of *Mr. Baxter*, The *Interest of the*

the Christian Protestant Religion in England must be kept up, by keeping up as much of Truth, Piety, and Reputation, as is possible in the parish Churches. his Defence of his Cure p. 36.

For the last word, that *parish bounds* are not *unchangeable*, 'tis acknowledged; if the cause be just and *Covent-garden* be not *Schysmatical*, yet still the Rule of co-habitation ought to be observed; and then our design is half spoiled. Especially if we add, as we needs must, that this *changing* or altering of *parish bounds*, lies not in the pleasure of private Persons: is not to be attempted without the order of Superiors, nor to the prejudice of Gods publick worship: wherein, if all order be not quite forgotten, the practice of the people should not ordinarily exceed, that which the known *Union* and *Communion* of Parishes, in the same Worship and Government, and the common *Custome*, and consequently *Allowance*, of the places intended, will warrant: wherein *London*, perhaps, if what you say be true, may claim some privilege.

He saith, he doth allow our *parochial Churches* to be *true Churches*, viz. Those of them that have *true Ministers*, otherwise not. So that where there are no Ministers, and where their Minister is not

true; there the *Parishes* are not *Churches*.

Tis likely some few small places, especially *Cures*, have no settled Ministers, but the Law requires their Communion with their *Mother-Church*, of which, in a sense, they are reckoned *Members*, if they are *Curaeies*.

And I hope there are fewer *false Ministers* than your *charity* supposeth. How far the people are bound to communicate with such as you call *intollerable*, shall be examined in the next Chapter.

But if this be all to be found at the bottom of your exceptions, as it seems to be, why do not your Brethren, confine their labour to such destitute places; especially, if this be the great reason why they must preach. At least their Charity should see them first provided for. Sure their voices will hardly reach to them from cities, and Corporations, and places usually furnisht well enough without them, though here they generally pitch their Tabernacle: you and they must think again and again, before you will be able to defend these practices upon such principles.

C H A P. XIII.

The People of England, Members of Parochial Churches. Objections answered. Especially that, from serving God better.

THe People of England, generally are, or ought to be (Members or Ministers) of our parochial Churches, and consequently are bound to atttend upon the publick worship of God in our Temples.

Ordinarily: I mean, I am not so strict to think, that they ought never to be absent, if they have reason, as the Statute intimates: or, that they may never go out of their own Parishes to hear a Sermon: provided alwayes they keep within the bounds of that latitude, which the Communion of Parish-Churches, and the custom of the place, as in London, if it be so there, as our Answerer affirms, will warant, as I said before.

But that generally, the people are of the Parishes Churches and ordinarily ought to communicate with them, there is hardly any thing more evident in reason or sence, and the judgement of the Non-Conf rmits.

For they were baptized into these particular Churches, as well as into the universal and the known Laws, both of Church and State, oblige

oblige their Consciences, to Communion with them. Besides, if they be not of the particular Church wherein they live, they are of none: but their ordinary attending upon the publique worship as they generally doe, or have done, concludes them by their own consent to say nothing now, of the inconveniences that follow separation from them; an Argument not to be despised till it be better considered and censured.

Mr. Baxter speaks very well and home to the point thus 'He that is a Member of the universal Church, is fit to be received into a particular Church; and there wanteth no more but Mutual consent: and if he have stately joined with a particular Church, in ordinary Communion, Consent hath been manifested, and he is a Member of that particular Church — Thus in Thesis.

' Then he subjoines; *This is the common case in England*, the persons who were baptiz'd in Infancy, were, at once, received into the Universal Church, and into some particular Church, and have held Communion at Age with both, &c.

In a case so plain, in the writings of the Old Non-Conformists, I shall only give you Mr. Baxter's Testimony for them all, especially

cially finding an *Emphasis* in his words, which are *these*.

'Speaking to his Brethren, saith he, Defence much more should you have endu-
of his cure red such, as the Non-Conformists of
p. 14. that age who used *Parish Communi-*
on and 'pleaded for it, against the Separatists,
'far Sharper language than ever I used,
'as their Books against *Johson* and *Cann*
'and *Erown*, and *Ainsworth*, do yet visibly
'declare.'

Hence, it is, that worthy Non Confor-
mist Mr. *Hilderham*, doth not only Judg-
it *Lanfie*, and a *Duty* to attend upon the
Parish *Congregation*, but useth many Ar-
guments against the *Ordinary* leaving our
own Ministers, to hear *more able*
men in other *Parishes*: and for
our coming reverently and at the
beginning of the Service.

And Mr. *Baxter* persuadeth with many
Arguments to Communion with the *Parish*
Churches which he would not have done, if
he had not thought it, not only to b. Lawful,
but a *Duty*, yea he taises expressly, that to
some it is a *Duty* to joine with some *Parish*
Churches, in the *Lords Supper* three times a
year, Defence of his Cure, p. 35. which he
saith, he proved b, twenty Reasons, and
by his own example avow'd in *publique*, and
his

his constant *resolution* so to do, he adds much weight to his said reasons.

And to give my *Answerer* his due, in this, as he doth not deny the truth of most of our Churches, so he doth much persuade, both by *reason* and his own *example*, to communion with them, and therefore he believeth (as I believe of him) that it is a duty.

But for the *Presbyterians* and
Ind. Schys. their judgement in the point be-
 pag. 143. fore 1660; let Mr. *Cawdrey* be
 heard at large.

Speaking against the *Independants* separa-
 tion, saith he, ‘If they did not suppose them-
 selves to be of some particular Church, it
 was their Error and their Fault; their
 Error because all the people of the Nation,
 were confin’d to that Church, where they
 lived; and liable to censure for leaving that
 Church, for partaking of Ordinances; and
 the Ministers for admitting them: their
 fault, because they were bound by way of
 duty, both by the Laws of the Nation, and
 also by the Law of God, to be of one or o-
 ther particular Congregation; meaning
 parochial.

But what saith our *Answerer* against
Obje&t. all this? he yieldeth much no doubt,
 pag. 41. where he saith, the old Non-Confor-
 mitie

misfits hold Lay communion with Parish Churches lawful : and so do we. But did not they also hold it a duty : prove the contrary if you can. I challenge him to shew in any of them, one word signifying it lawful, to hold Communion with any other stated Church in England, besides the parochial, or that, ever they preach'd in houses, as you unfairly intimate, when the people should be in the parish Church ; or, that any learned Presbyterian said so, before 1660 : if not, what signifies all your new-erected distinctions, pag. 34, 35.

Object. But in some places, we cannot profit by the Minister.

answ. You may profit by the prayers, and Sacraments. The old Non-Conformists will not indure the objection, against all, or against any weak, if honest Minister. Let Mr. Hildertham's reasons against it be examined : saith he, *Our Shame, our Sin, and*

*On John 4. just cause of humbling to us, if we
cannot profit by the meanest Minister*

¶ 225, 226. after that God hath sent. And the power of the Ministry dependeth not on the excellency of the Teachers gifts, but upon God's blessing : though sometimes he thinks people may go to hear other Ministers of better gifts.

Object. But some Ministers are intollerable.

Answe.

Ans^r. I grant the *Non-Conformists*, and particularly Mr. *Hilderham*, do *all w* the people, in such cases, to go from their own *Parish*; yet he puts in three Rules to the Case, that it be done without *open breach* or contempt to the Churches *Order*, without contempt of their *own Pastors*, and without *Scandal* and offence to them and their *peo- ple*.

But if no Ministers be *intollerable*, but such as our *Ans^rwerer* describes to be so, I hope, there are but *few* such in *our dayes*; what ever there were in Mr. *Hilderhams* time.

Advice. By *Intollerable*, saith he, I mean
 1. Such as are *ignorant* of, or *er- ronous* against the *Essentials* of *Christiani- ty*. 2. Such as are *unable* to teach them o-
 thers. 3. Such as *malignantly* preach down
 the *practice* of *an Holy life*, or in a word,
 such whose *Ministry* really tendeth to do
 more *hurt* than *Good*.

There are *Intollerable* indeed, and if there should chance to be found *one or two such within a Province*; I hope not so many,) sure, some *duty* we owe concerning them. But what's that? in the first place, we are certainly bound to endeavour his *amendment* if that be not to be done, but he be found *in- curable*, he is the more *intollerable*, and our

next

next duty to endeavour to remove him.

Cure of Ch. div p 106. So far Mr. Baxter's advice is wholesome and apposite; use all your diligence to amend him: and if you cannot do that, use all your interest to get him out, and get a better, indeed he adds, if you cannot do that, deliver your own soul from him by removing to a better, if you are free: he means, if you are not under the command of others, remove to another Parish, which none can except against.

But all this while there is no room made for Separation: the Non-Conformists never allowed this, the Holy Scriptures as Mr. Baxter tells us, has not a word to that purpose.

Obj. But we are troubled again with his *Last refuge*, which attempts us every where, your Churches are allowed, and communion with them, when we have no opportunity to do better: but to serve God better, we may leave your Churches and gather others.

Answe. This hath pirk't up to my trouble two or three times already; I will now give it such a blow as I hope to hear on't no more.

1. If we may not refuse Communion with our own particular Church, while

96 Non Conformists New

while we can do it *without sin*: the only condition allowed, by all that were pure *Non-Conformists*; yea, and by the very *Brownists* themselves, then this pretence is *vaine*. But you grant you may *continue* such Communion with the *Parish* *without sin*, by the tenour of the *Objection*.

2. This Objection, extends not only to the change of the *Minister*, but of the very *Worship*, the *publique places* of assembling, and the *parochial bounds* of *Churches*: which as in the *nature* and consequence of the things themselves are very dangerous, so they were all quite *contrary* to the *reason* and *practise* of former *Non-Conformists*. They might think, they had reason sometimes to *do better*, but they never meant it, in any way contrary to the *publique Worship*, and Assemblies; but only in some other *Parish Church*.

3. 'Tis in effect the same excuse that the *Brownists* had for their *separation*, only, not quite so *considerable*; they complained things were *bad*; and you would have them *better*; and therefore *seperate*, as they did.

5. The very same plea, that the *Independents* used in other words, *more plausible* to their purpose. Namely, pretence of disorders in the *Church*, and pretence of *reformation*, and yet more neer to the present pre-

pretence, that they might worship with purer worship, all which Mr. Cawdry, the Patron of Presbytery, hath taken notice of and answered to Dr. Owen. Boldly appealing the Dr. in the point, as I do my Answerer in his words.

In dep fur. I leave it to his own consideration, whether it be lawful ^{for} *ther p 142.* people that are Members of true Churches as ours are acknowledged to be. . . Upon some disorders in a Church, or pretence of Reforming themselves, to separate from that Church and to erect another: when as they have done their duty to reform it, in those disorders, notwithstanding which they may without Sin Communicate with that Church? But rather to break true Churches into pieces, than to bear with some inconveniences, and I desire a president of such a practice in Scripture or Story, and as he saith so do I.

But the pretence of worshiping God better, and therefore they may gather a purer *Ind Schy:* Church, out of a *true* Church the Presbyterian seems to deride it as not worthy a serious consideration or answer is there saith he, any institution of Christ, that they must gather members out of true Churches to make a purer Church, if so it be?

4. But the *Sting* is in the *Tail*, gathering Churches out of our *Parishes*, that they may serve God better, is an intollerable principle and practice; it plainly puts *Raines* into the peoples hands, to Govern and reform themselves, without their *Bishops* or *Pastors*: which, me-thinks, Mr. Baxter should not like very well; and without the *Civil-Magistrate*, which the *Presbyterians* could not endure.

To Reform themselves, I say, without the order of any kind of *Governors*, not only in one single *Parish*, but throughout the *Kingdome*: nor only to reform abuses in *Administrations* but in the *worship* and *Goverment*, yea even to the utter dissolution of our *Church-state*, and the *bounds* and *places* of our *Parochial* congregations, &c the setting up of other *Churches*, other *Ministers*, and another *Worship* and *Government* throughout the *Kingdome*; so far as this Rule takes.

For the Rule, in its *practical Nature* and use, is *general*. And if it be the duty of *one*, it is the duty of *another*, and of *all*, to worship God better in this *new way*; and consequently, *all* are bound to worship God better; and all must joine in these *new Congregations* while the *Bishops* and *Ministers* and *Temples* are left useles, and there is no way which our *Author* can think of, to prevent & stop this
deluge

deluge but the peoples prudence : and how likely that is to do it, let the wise consider. Was ever Non-Conformist or Presbyterian before, of this opinion or any one that was not a down-right Separatist?

Dr. Owen, having said, that, if a man cannot prevail to have the Church reformed, he may dispose of himself, as to particular Church Communion, to his best advantage: one would think this was modestly spoken in comparison, yet observe how the Presbyterian takes him up.

Ind. Schys. ‘ This is liberality enough, and p 189, 190. ‘ Dictator-like spoken, does not this open a door to all confusion in Church and State? And give every man as well as any, liberty, if they judge any thing amiss in Church or State, to turn Reformers, if Superiors cannot, or will not reform it?

‘ In a State or National Church, as that of the Jews; was it lawful for a few men, when State and Church were all corrupted, to go and reform both, because they that had the power in their hand, either could not or would not reform? I think I may safely say, this is an Anabaptistical Münster principle at the bottom. So he,

Besides, the rule hath run equally in it, against the Reformers themselves, every

Sect will plead the same liberty to serve God better, and as Mr. Baxter hath well Item'd
Defence of Separated Churches themselves,
Cure. p. 50, (and not at all varie from their own light by which they ascended unto separation) it will admit of no consistency: parties will arise in the separated Churches, and separate again from them till they are dissolved, as experience witnesseth.

But because, my Author speaks of gathering Churches for the first three hundred years after Christ, I shall not disturb him by enquiring out of what Churches they were gathered, only shall give him a Presbyterians expostulation, and conclude this Chapter.

Will he call that a peaceable proceeding
Cawd. In- which is done without the Au-
dep. further thority of the Christian Civil Ma-
p. 141, gistrate: and to the disturbance
 of all the Churches of the Nati-

on.

Were it granted, that in the first Constitution of a Church people might by their own free Consent, join to walk together, &c: is this course tollerable in settled Churches, to the confusion and overthrow of the very Constitution of our Churches?

CHAP. XIV.

The present practice plain separation, Objections by the Answerer considered.

THe present practice of gathering Churches out of our Churches is separation.

Though our Churches are true Churches: and the persons concerned, are or ought to be Members of them; yet do they properly separate from them.

This is matter of Fact evident in it self, and to the senses of too many ocular Witnesses.

1. They dislike, or *distast*, our Parochial Communion: some, as *Antichristian*; some, as *corrupt*; some, as *defective*; and not so good, as they would have it; and some, perhaps, because they like not our Ministers: and some, as he intimates for Communion, with their *old ejected* Pastors, what their several reasons are, (for they are far from being all of a mind, as he acknowledgeth) we can but *guess*, but they do all dislike our Communion, at least, comparatively none can deny or *doubt* this.

2. Upon this *dislike*, Whatever the cause of it be, they do plainly forsake our *Parish-Churches*, and publique worship. Now, we do not say, that *non-Actual Communion*, is properly *Separation*: yet all men say, that a *renouncing Communion*, or *denying to Communicate* with any Church, much more *own*, upon any *dislike*, or for any cause, except *sin*, is properly *Separation* and *Schysm*: it is not *actually not communicating with a true*

In'. Schys. *Church*, but *renouncing Communion*,
p. 188. that, we think makes the Shysmatick, 'tis this, in which *Amesius* himself placeth the very *formality* of Schysm.

*Am. de
Schys.*

Schysm is directly a *breach of unity*; as that is a breach of *charity*, refusing to Communicate with a true Church, when I have opportunity, especially, my *own Church*; is a plain breach of both: what ever my reason be, short of *Sin*.

3. But *thirdly*, they perfect their Schysm and separation, by gathering themselves into other *Congregations* under other *Ministers*, and for another mode of *Worship* than is allowed by our Church and Lawes; and thus become *Anti-churches*, and to make this new *Church-State*, as opposite to ours, as may be, they generally, meet at the

same

same time that we do: & that, not only where the Parishes are suspected, defective in parts, gifts, graces or Administrations: much less intollerable, or where there are none at all, as was noted before, and in such places as they suppose to be so ill-provided: for we hear nothing of their charity, but in places, where neither these Ministers nor their followers have the least exception to the Parish-Minister.

And thus, they separate, not for sometimes and for some ordinances, but constantly, & for all ordinances: the Word, Prayers, and both Sacraments, and that generally, in all places near us, without any such distinction of Minister or any thing else; so that though I have enquired, I can hear but of one Minister, within a very large compass that takes the liberty of Indulgence, and doth not so abuse it. And I fear, they do so generally throughout England, if we may guess at other places by the practice of these: except your good example and advice have a better influence there, than here.

For, I cannot but let you know, that your Canons are so contrary to their purposes and practises, that I have some reason to believe, that our new Church gatherers hereabout are generally as much displeased with the rules whereby you would bound their ex rava-

gant practises, as they seem to be pleased with your Magisterialness over me,

And, by the way, give me leave to tell you, that two things especially, I cannot take well at your hands. 1. That you would insinuate that such as call themselves Presbyterians, which you say, are not so, you shuffle them amongst the rest of the Sects, which are for gathering of Churches. 2. That you intimate, you knew their minds; and that they would not separate and gather Churches in the manner we see, by sad experience they generally do.

For, I do acknowledge you sufficiently discover, your own Inclination, hopes, and desires are otherwise than we find their practices: yea, you seem to intimate their practices to be otherwise: they have deceived you; as indeed, you did me: who am sorry to find your pen employed for the Countenance, to say no more of Separation and Schism in the highest measure that this poor Church ever yet experimented.

Why do I hear words to excuse and alleviate the Matter; when their deeds declare the quite contrary to what you hope and intimate? all your prop sitions and purpos(es), can never make them either not Presbyterians or Separatists; unless, by their quitting their former principles, they are sunk into the

number of *Independents*: for it is hard to say which of the Congregations is most *Congregational*.

Obj. Yo seem to wonder, p. 40. that I charged not your *preaching* before your *indulgence*, with *Schism* as well as now.

Ansiv. No doubt, if it were so before, as we see it is since, I might yet venture to do it, but, Sir, let me tell you something, that I know will not be easie to you. In the *City* where I am a Preacher, there might, perhaps *thirty or forty ordinarily meet by steal.b,* and perhaps not at the same time of our *publique worship*, whereas, there are now *six or seven allowed places;* and perhaps, they may share three thousand of our *Members* among them; that now, so far as we can judge, *totally separate*: yet I think never any one of them complained of the *inability, infidelity, or scandal of the Parish-Ministers.* Now when we see such a *Torrent* preparing to bear down all *our Churches*, I think, it is time to speak, I would deliver my own soul, if I cannot save the Church from the evil begun.

Speak in earnest; Sir, if the matter be thus indeed, is it not *separation with a witness*, if you will not, let others speak.

Cawd. Independ. The old Rule was the sincere p. 161. 162. preaching of the Word, and right

right Administration of Sacraments are the Characters of a true Church, which we having, and they separating from us, how shall this Crime be named, but by Schyism in the highest degree.

And the rather does this relate to Schyism, in gathering Churches. p. 180. Because they do not only depart themselves, but draw off others also into a formed Faction.

CHAP. XV.

The present practice of Separation and gathering Churches is causeless and unwarantable. Objections of the Answerer considered.

Because, it is Separation from true Churches, by such as are, or ought to be Members, of those true Churches; both negatively, and positively, and totally so; and lastly, which only remains to be proved, because it is both *Rash* and *Unjust*, and without sufficient grounds of offence given by these Churches.

For it hath already appeared that such separation is *sinful* and *Schyism*, in the worst sense of the word, when it is *Rash* or *Unjust*, without such grounds; it only remains to be shew'n, that the present pra-

ctise

life aforelaid, is both *Rash* and *Unjust*. First, it is, apparently a *Rash Separation*; for those that go from us, to these new *Churches* could not foresee, or reasonably imagine this *Liberty* now indulged, a *Week*, (if a day) before the *Declaration* was publish't.

And how *suddenly*, they did upon it, prepare for the work, and separate to their new *Congregations* and *Guides*, 'tis too well known to insist on: and where is the man (if one such there be, let him come forth to own it) that advised with his *Parish-Minister* about his *departure*, or was so civil to *take his leave*; much less, shew'd him any *just occasion* of his so sudden resolution; or what gave him the offence in the *person* or *Administration* of his pastor; or in the *Worship* and *Communion* or *Conversation* of his fellow *Members*, and moved or disposed him thereunto, before he did *Actually* separate. Much less did he exercise any *patience* or *long-suffering*, in order to his own *Satisfaction* or the *Reformation* of the Church (of which he was a member) in what he thought *amiss*.

If such separation is not *Rash* and sudden, if it fail not in the *due manner* of proceeding, shew your *Reason*, or else bear the *Censure* and charge of *Schysn*, from all sound and judicious

judicious *Casuists*, let the pretence or *cause* otherwise, be never so great and just.

Indeed, they generally gave up themselves, with all manner of dilligence, to obtain their *Licenses*: to contrive their *Houses*; to appoint their *meetings*: *conspiring* in this, as appears by their practice, that they would hold their *Assemblies*, at the same hour with the *parochial*; the directest method they could imagine, to be *opposite* to us, yet, not so well considering, what might be the *consequences*; as one of the *sobereft* of their Ministers complained, who observed it *too late*, which had they had *patience* and *wisdome*, first to have consulted my *Answerer*, might in all likelihood, in *many places*, at least have been happily prevented.

2. But, Alas! this is not the Burthen of *Ephraim*; their separation fails in the *foundation* and *grounds* of it, it is not *accountable*, upon any terms of *Charity*, *Justice*, or *Christian sobriety*: strictly, the *Churches*, from which they seperate, hath not given them any *such offence*, or cause of offence sufficient, to *justify* their seperation, either in *truth* or in the judgment of any, but *themselves*: much leis, the old *Non-Conformists* and *Presbyterian*s; as will soon appear in full light.

Our

Our Answerer hath set you a hard Game to play, here; for you must shew us such reason why you leave us, as will excuse you from separation, and yet justify your gathered Churches.

Which, upon the suppositions already proved; that our Churches are true Churches; that you are or ought to be members of them, and to continue in Communion with them, while you live in them, if we have given you no just occasion to discontinue it, seems to be a plain contradiction, and your New Churches are no better than stated separations.

But, laying aside all little insignificant Artifices and modern evasions, the question in short is this. Whether we can have any just plea for separation from any Church of which we are members, while we may communicate with it, without communion in sin. The negative hath appeared, all set parties have subscribed the negative; and hardly any but yourselves, ever question'd it, if yet you do so.

The Protestants by the Papists, the Brownists by the Puritans; the Anabaptist, Independent, and Interdependent, by the Presbyterian, are all charged with Schism; and all without scruple, put their controversies to this Issue; if you that charge us with Schism, can prove that

that we may hold Communion with you without sinning, we acknowledge the charge, therefore they allwaies defend their separation, by chargeing *sin* upon their *Communion* from whom they separated also. On the other hand, they endeavoured to make the charge of *Schysm* upon those that seperated, by answering the objections of *Sin*, against their several Communions, so that on all sides, this sense of *Schysm*, passed uncontrollled; and was never I think disputed or doubted before, if it be so now, and Dr. Ames hath put it into the very Definition of *Schysm*: and makes it his great Rule, by which he answers the Cases about it.

But, to prevent mistakes, I must speak with *Caution*; by discontinuing Communion, I do not mean, only a not having *Aetual* Communion with the Church, for that may be involuntary, as when a man is excommunicated; or necessitated by sickness, or if you will have it added, by too great a multitude of members: yea, it may chance to be voluntary, yet not properly *Schysm*, when we do not attend Gods worship, through neglect of our Duty, and a prophane principle: but of these we speak not here.

By discontinuing our Communion, I mean, a denying or refuting Communion with our own Church upon any dislike or distaste of its

its *Worship*, or *Minister*, or *Members*. Now whether this distaste arise from fear of *Communicating in sin*, where there is no *just cause* of, or without such *fear*; such refusing or denying Communion is *Schysm*, yea, as *Ames* adviseth, if there be *real evil* in some part of *Communion* in a true Church, to depart farther from it, then *that evil* requires, is *Schysm*. So when there is no *real* or *pretended* sinfulness in the Communion of our Church, and yet, we take *dislike* and *separate*, and *totally seperate*, and gather ourselves into new *Congregations* in opposition thereunto, who dare say, this is no *Schysm*?

Tis not worth the question, though you some where make it, whether it be *Schysm* to remove our dwelling from one Parish to another? Our civil necessities may force us to it. we hold no such Matrimony, between Pastor and People, as some talk of: but upon fair occasion, either may remove. All Parishes are in Communion together, and are of the general *Constitution* of the Church of England: by such a removal, you become a member of another Parish Church, and are bound by the Laws of the Land, and by the Rule of *cohabitation* of membership to hold Communion with the Church in which you live, you have still *real* Communion with the

the former Church, not only in the substance, but mode of its Worship, and its very Constitution: but by removing to these New Churches, you do not, you cannot cease to be of a Parish at all, nor of a Parochial Church, without Schism from the Church in which you live; and from all the Parochial Churches in England; and from the Church of England it self. I mean, unless you can prove that something is required in our way of Worship that you cannot joyn in without sinning.

The question is, to bring the point home, what sin is to be found in our Worship, wherein the people that joyn with us, must needs Communicate? If none can be found we must write Schism upon your separation and we cannot help it.

Use no delatory pleas: blind us not with wide discourses about what is fit to be imposed, in order to peace, &c. and about the duty of Superiors, that concern you not, or about the hard conditions of Conformity upon Ministers, as such: we are speaking of Lay-Communion, wherein all that are not in the place of Ministers are to look to their Duty. And if there be any thing required of them, in order to their Communion with us, that is indeed sinful, say what is it, and speak to the point.

In this Case (Sir) be Judge your self, you expressly acknowledge , that our *Worship* is not such as no man may lawfully Communicate in : then , certainly you believe , that there is nothing in it , that is really and *materialy* evil , or evil in it self ; for then no man might lawfully joyn in it : but if it should become evil accidentally , from the particular condition of any private man , let him remove that evil , and not commit a greater by Separation.

But pray (Sir) whv do you seem thus to limit your *kindness* and charity to our Communion ! if it be not such as no man , why is it not such as all men , may lawfylly Communicate in ? If you may lawfully Communicate in some of our Churches (as in another place you speak) why not in all ? or why do you leave the people in such *distractions* ? have not all our Churches the same *Ordinances* ? our *Ministers* the same *orders*? have they not all the same *matter* , and the very same *Mode of Worship* ? you do not think the worth of the *Minister* goes into the lawfulness of our *prayers* and *Sacraments* : or that we may not joyn with the *Liturgy* that is not seconded with a good *Sermon*, I am sure you lay not the weight of your limitation upon the *manners* of the people; that's a principle you seem to abhor : neither can

you make use of any exception against the *Diocesan Church*, where in all our Churches are equally concerned, except a few *peculiars*. I am sorry, to say I know not what you mean until you better explain your self, give me leave to understand you indefinitely; especially while you say, you do & will hold Communion with our own *Parish-Churches* your self, and that you make it your business to advise and perswade others also, thereunto, which I am very certain you would not do, if you did not believe, not only, that our way of Worship is *Lawful i. e.* not sinful, but also *Good*; and that they in duty ought to attend it and Communicate with us, in it.

But, pray Sir, Why then do you p. 34. intimate, as if some *Parish-Churches* did impuse some things which God forbids? Indeed, when you speak seriously, you seem to reduce all the peoples exceptions in this kind, to the two known heads; *kneeling* at the Communion, and the *Cross* at Baptism.

1. For *kneeling*, you your self seem not only to allow, but to approve it, you also practise it and you know, Mr. Baxter speaks handsomely for it, in his dispute.

p. 411.

2. For the *Sign of the Cross*, made at *Baptism*, this indeed is required of the Minister,

nister ; and 'tis his peculiar part to do it; and for ought I know , it is no more to the people than his *wearing the Surplus*, and if he knows it to be his *duty*, why will you deny him his *liberty* to do it. Mr. Baxter teacheth us, that in such things , we ought to be guided by our *Pastors*, which is certainly required ; while they are only suspected , or at least they are not so certain ,

Disput. that they are *sinful*; as we are

484. certain , that we ought to obey, as he reasons well.

Especially , Signing with this *Signe*, being the Ministers own *Act*, you may venture to give him so much power, asto do it , without offence to you, or , so great offence , as to cause you to seperate. Besides , if you cannot be perswaded to like this *one Action*, yet you must remember the Rule of *Ames*, and seperate for this, in *nothing else* but what needs all this trouble ? you have known a way this *ten years*, to answer this *scruple*, by *private Baptisms*: and you will know, how to serve your selves , in this of the *Kings Declaration* without my *advice* but then , why should you seperate , or gather into new *Churches*, for that , which the *Declaration* removes without such doings? why do you stun and distract the Church , by killing a *Gnat* upon her *forehead*, with so great a stroke.

Sir, you intimate, p. 35. the *Cafe is altered*: but surely, not much as to this point betwixt us and the *old Non-Conformists*, yet you well know, *all conformed with the people in*, and contended for *Lay Communion*, against the *Brownists*, yea, it is a worthy observation of Mr. Baxter, that if there be any alteration, 'tis for the better for the people, as he ingeniously confesseth and accounts. Take his words at large.

Defence of Conformity be to us another thing
Cure of ch. div. p. 55. (by reason of the new impositions)

' than it was to our *predecessors*, yet,
' to the people *Conformity* is the same, if not
' easier (especially to them that I now speak
' to) for it is the *Liturgy*, *Ceremonies*, and
' *Ministry* that most alienate them—and the
' *Liturgy* is a little amended as to them, by
' the change of the *Translation*, and some
' little words, and by some longer Prayers,
' and the *Ceremonies* are the same. And thir-
' ty years ago, there were many bare Rea-
' ding, not preaching Ministers, for one that
' there is now: therefore, our case of sepa-
' ration being the same, with that it was of
' old, I take it to be fully confuted by the
' Antient Non-Conformists.

' And I have so great a veneration for
the

the worthy Names (much more an estimation of the reasonings) of Mr. Cartwright, Egerton, Hildersham, Dod, Amesius, Parker, Bains, Brightman, Ball, Bradshaw, Paget, Langley, Nicols, Hering, and many other such, that I shall not think they knew not why they chose this subject and wrote more against Separation than the *Conformists* did. Thus he hath given you a full Jury of old *Non-Conformists*, and their verdict against Separation from our Parochial Congregations, and our present way of worshipping God: and saved me much labour in that particular.

CHAP. XVI.

Further proof that the practice is Schism, by way of Reply to his Objections against it.

But for all this, gathering Churches is not Separation. Who will say so besides? Refusing our Communion, and gathering themselves into distinct Congregations, I am sure was that which the old *Non-Conformists* wrote against, and called it Separation, and though other things occurred by way of Argument, this was the main scope and bore the Burthen of their Disputations.

Besides, you cannot in earnest accuse our Communion with sin, and what then can excuse your leaving us and gathering new Churches; from Separation: according to the judgment of all but *your selves*, the Separatists themselves not excepted, who, never that I ever heard of, ventured to question the major proposition of this Argument, but denied the minor.

Those which separate from a true Church in whose Communion is nothing sinful, are guilty of Schysn.

But you separate from a true Church in whose Communion there is nothing sinful.

Therefore you are guilty of Schysn.

For all this, we may gather Churches and be neither Schismatics nor Separatists, and we have eight Reasons to prove it, a whole cluster of them: we shall try their weight, especially, seeing they would bear us down in a point contrary to the fence of all mankind; for new reasons are not alwaies best.

But they are clung together so that we take seven of them at once, or they are spoiled.

1. The Non-Conformists, though they gather Churches are no Separatists: for they will not pronounce any of your Parish-Churches

ches Null, which have lawful Ministers: not Null by any means, but they will make them as void as they can.

2. They will not say, that your *Worship* is such, as no man may lawfully communicate in. We are beholding to you, perhaps one or two in a Nation, scarce in a Parish, by your good will. 3. They shall hold that; *Parish bounds* are very convenient: they still hold this, what ever else they have let slip—— and none ordinarily, but *Parishioners*, to be of the Church: but what Church do you mean? the *old* or *new*, none of the Parish, if they can help it shall be of the *old*, and as many *out* of the Parish, as they can draw in for ought I perceive shall be of the *new*. 4. They are driven from the *Parish-Ministry* against their *Wills*: and had rather hold their *Ancient stations*, & they will thankfully return when they have leave. But must they therefore break *ancient bounds* and spoil the *Parishes* to which they would return? and after they have taught the people to go astray, they are not sure they will return with a whistle. 7. they set not up the *Church-Government* of the people over the *Pastors*, but they dissolve the government of the *Parochial* and *Episcopal Pastor*, and teach the people by their countenancing of sepe-

ration to despise and shake of both. 8. They desire nothing more than as neighbour Ministers — in love to carry on the same work of Christ with us, and do nothing less.

But what of all this? therefore they are no *seperatists*: how so; because, herein they differ in their *principles* from the old *Seperatists*; what then, if they are the same in that very *practice* that made them *Seperatists*,

I am much of the mind still, that those that are guilty of *sinful seperation* are *seperatists*: and that those that *voluntarily seperate* from a true Church where they may communicate *without sin*, and gather *Churches*, in *oppesion* thereunto, are guilty of a *sinful seperation*, do with your reasons what you will.

They may perhaps prove that the *old Seperatists* had some *principles* about these things worse than the *new*: but, under your favour, I think if these *seperate as they did* and think themselves they have not so much to say against our *Churches* as they of *old* did, their *practise of seperation* is the *worse for this*, and not a whit the better. Now give me leave to bring forth my *reas.* *for* too. Tis this

If a great and real cause of *seperation* does

does warrant and justifie it in all mens judgment but your own, the lesser the cause of separation is, the worse it is, and the more schismatical; and consequently where there is no real cause at all, 'tis worst of all.

Therefore, I conceive the old Non-*Conformists*, as well as the late *Presbyterians*, first charged those that separated with the error of the fact viz. Separation: and in the second place, upon their reasons given for their separation, from the Nullity of our Churches and Ministry, &c. they set themselves upon the proove and defence of them but never took such their false opinions to be of the essence of their Separations; but only as their reasons and excuses for their evil practises of Separations. This ought to be heeded; and then what becomes of your lump of reasons? seaven of the eight, you see, are light and weigh very little, if the matter against them be weigh'd also.

But, what think you of the other reason, the sixt in number? truely that hath so great a Snack of the old separation, and self-esteem and admiration of their own way that we throw it away before as worse then none, when ever it came to our hands; especially in chapter 13.

If you suspect us, take it into your hand

hand , as 'tis wash't and rubb'd and presented to you in the best manner the Author can set it forth; he saith , they prefer their own manner of worshiping God as better than the Liturgy in their opinion (no doubt of that) and therefore to be chosen when they may choose (but who hath given them this liberty ! and freed their Consciences from the obligation I know not , though they may sin unpunish'd) but they account it not the only acceptable worship , but are present with you in spirit, as the great Apostle was with the corrupt Corinthians : but why only in spirit and not in body . I had like to have thought that Communion in spirit in a bad worship , had been the more dangerous of the two ,) desiring a part in the prayers of all true Christians in the World, and truely no more than need ; if by such practises they seperate allmost from them all , and think to be justified by such kind of Reasons .

But who ta'st not the smack of Brownism and Donatism here ? for what is the meaning of it but that our way of worship is not so good as it should be ; for certainly, theirs, is no better than it should be ; yet they must leave ours , to enjoy their own as better ; our way is therefore , defective, if not Corrupt. But, wherein is it defective more than yours?

have

have not we as many *Psalms* and *Chapters* read, as many *Sacraments Administred*, as many *Sermons* preached, as you, doth not the *Parish Minister*, generally pray before and after Sermon, as well as yours? and have we not the *Common-prayer* over and above? where is our *defect*? away with these pitiful shews instead of *reasonings*. If we are *corrupt* in our worship, say so, if that be the *reason* of your separation, say so, and be *Separatists* indeed say plainly 'tis a *purer worship* and *reformation* that you leave us for.

But, let it be what it will, you *yourself* think our way *acceptable to God*; you *joine* with us in it; you *perswade others* to it: so that what *defects* or *corruptions* you find in it, cannot *justify* their *seperation* from us, in *your opinion*, and I see not, how you can avoid *joining* with us in this also; and to say, they are *Schysmatics* for so doing. Especially such Non-conformists, whose *Administrations* you suppose as bad as the *Liturgy*. p. 16.

But you intimate one difference more (for your self *alone*, I suppose) betwixt you and the *Brownists* in another place, where you ask, whether such gathered Churches would be *Schysmatical* if the *Common prayer* were *read in them*? But, what is the reading the

Com-

Common prayer to Separation from the Church? or, why cannot you better hear it in the Temple; the same mode of worship, is no excuse, but an aggravation of division and separation; seeing they that use it, say they like it; and so have no reason from the point of worship to forsake our Communion. We have a Demonstration from the Church of Corinth; who, had all the same Apostolical mode of worship, and yet are charged by the Apostle himself, with divisions and Schism.

Wherefore, though we take it kindly that you are moderate in your own practice, and let the World and your brethren know it, and propose your advice and example to your brethren so seasonably in it, I cannot but a little reflect upon those words of yours p. 100.

But, though I will not bind my self (take heed of that) I here tell the World,—if opportunity—I would sometimes pray freely without forms, and sometimes use some part of the Common Liturgy: and sometime use the Reformed Liturgy, which in 1600. was agreed on by Commissioned Non-Conformists, though being done in extremis, it should be review'd and perfected.

But why would you not use all these at once? then 'tis like some body would be pleased.

In

In earnest, must the Liturgy established by Law, and so long practice, obtain no more with you, than the other two waies mentioned? Speak plain, were the Non-Conformists then Commissioned for that purpose, to make a new Liturgy, as you do more than intimate? Really, me thinks, untill this new one be amended, you should preter our Liturgy, which was made by as good men, and with less haste, and more deliberation.

But you may have some peculiar reason why you would honour this Reformed Liturgy, as you call it, pray what is it? Because it is new? or because you are for change? or for a third reason you wot of? Indeed Novelty, Change, and Property are three great Arguments with some men, that are no small pretenders to Antiquity, Resolution, and self-denial.

But all this concerns not you: pray what are your reasons for the use of it? you have told us nothing of it yet, bat its imperfections, and I do not hear of any one hitherto that, from the worth and excellency of it, hath been induced to practise it: your reasons may possibly draw some one or other to joine with you in that new Liturgy: In the mean time pardon me in the mention of an odd passage, I heard in the times of our late

Confu-

Confusions; what Church are you of pray,
(one askt another) I am, quoth he, of Mr.
Barbers Church? Mr. Barbers Church, a
Church I have not heard of before, pray
how many members have you? truely, saith
he very gravely, we have none yet, but him
and I; but we hope we shall have more.

CHAP. XVII.

More direct proof that this practise is Schysm.
With considering the principles upon which
they seperate.

I Shall fix my foot and prove more direct-
 ly, that such seperation without *just ground*, is plain Schysm in all the *Notion of*
 Schysm we have hitherto received in the
 Church of God, without any such considera-
 tion of the *Brownists* principles, deny-
 ing the *truth* of the *Churches or Ministry*,
 or *lawfulness* of the *worship*, from which
 such seperation was made.

1. First in the *Scriptures*, Schysm is con-
 demned with dividing the Church into
 parties; forsaking the *Assembling of our selves*
 together, seperating themselves, drawing
 disciples after them, creeping into Houses,
 and leading silly women Captive, and the
 like

like; without any such thing, as questioning, much less denying the truth of those *Churches, Ministry or Worship*, as is evident beyond all dispute and to a plain Demonstration, in those Schismaticks in the Church of Corinth: who kept in their publicque Assemblies, and indeed preferred one of their Ministers in the same Church, before the rest: but denied not any of them, except to bear them; and that was their Schism, though they complained not against either the Constitution of their Church, or the corruptions in it; which yet were great and many, both in Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, as is well known.

Yea, though the Ministers in Corinth, walked in love together, and carried on the same work of Christ, as you pretend with us, and made no such attempts of drawing parties from their brethren, to themselves, and had no hand at all in the Schism, that we read of, but the great Apostle himself dislikes and protests against it, because only the people too much admired some, to the dislike of others of their Ministers, they are charged with Schism, as before was noted.

2. Shortly after, we have an account of Schism from Ignatius, and what was it, but a not owning or submiting to the Government

ment of their proper *Bishps* and *Pasters*, without any ill reflections or denials of their office, or the truth of their *Churches*, or any such thing.

3. Next, we read of that great *Schysm* both of the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches, (for neither could be freed from the charge of it) about the time of the celebration of *Easter*, upon this slight occasion, without any of the said *Brownistical* principles, they seperated from, by refusing Communion with one another, for many years together; and though the occasion was so very slight, it is noted for a great, yea therefore, for the greater *Schysm* in *Church* story.

4. After this, we read of the *Schysm* of *Donatism*: this, though it spread, and run very deep into Naughty, and much like to our later *Separation-principles* about the *Church* at last; yet at first it was occasioned by a contention about the Bishoprick of *Cecilianus*, and therefore branded with the name of *Schysm*; especially, when the *Donatists* much like our late *Sectaries*, refused Communion with the *Church*, because *corruptions* were tollerated: contending that they were the only *pure Church* and spouse of Christ; and this is little otherwise, than what at present is pretended, by such as would not be called *Separatists*.

5. The great ground of Schysm observed from *Church story* by Mr. Hales, was generally, *contention about Bishops*, as it is now without any Brownijistical principles.

Of Schysm p. 12. He notes, that at first there was but one *Cathedral Church* in one *Diocese*, afterwards, some had *two* some more, and it happen'd many times, that these *Cathedrals* had *distinct Bishops*, and these by their *differences*, many times came to have *distinct Churches* ; and these *Churches* refused to communicate with one another for the sake of *their Bishops* which was called *Schysm* : though it was, no *Brownism* it was a seperation very like to ours in our *Parish-Churches*, this was, faith St. Cyprian, *Erigere altare contra Altare*, and to this doth that father impute (as Mr. Hales further observes) all *Church-disorders*, and if you read him you would think he thought no other *Church-tumult* to be *Schysm* but this.

Indeed, *Schysm* is any unwarrantable breach of *unity* in the *Church of God*; where you find this, ! you find *Schysm*, let the occasion be what it will, tis a sinful *practice*, dividing the *Church*, by our selves or others and lies not in the reason of that *practice*, unless it be considerable for the *excuse* of it: as all *Dirtines consent*.

Contr Faust. I. Heare St. Ausine, Schysm
20. c. 3. & de m^z est, &c. Schysm is a late
fid. & oper. c. 3. dissention or disagreement of a
& contr. Cres. gr. Congregation arising from some
l. 2. c. 7. Diversity in opinion; no mat-
 ter what it be.

And again, more full to our purpose.
Sbysmatis facit non diversa fides, sed Com-
munionis disrupta societas. Do you ask what
 is Schysm? it is not a differing Faith, but
 a breaking the fellowship of Communion,
 which makes men Schysmatics.

Yet more plainly, Schysma est eadem opini-
 antem & eodem Ritu utentem Solo Congrega-
 tionis delectari dissidio. Schysm is, when a
 man, that professeth the same faith and wor-
 ship, is delighted only with the difference of an
 Assembly or Congregation. You might have
 advised this Father a little better, had he
 been now alive but, it seems, your objection
 was then urged by some that you are loath to
 own,

And this same notion of Schysm kept its
 ground in the Church from St. Aug. to Be-
 za's time *κισια σive διχοσατια est,*
 An. in I. &c. Schysm or Division, faith Beza
 Co. I. 10.

is this, when men are so addicted
 to some men or to some outward Rites, that
 though they do agree in the chief points of
 Religion, yet they are estranged in their minds,

and

and engage themselves into parties and Fac-
tions. Thus Beza, and yet he passeth for a
Presbyterian, and so doth Mr. Newcomen,
who useth all these places of Authority, to
my very purpose, against the Independents,
who would it seems, have excused their
Schism from the Moderation of their prin-
ciples, and the soundness of their Doctrine,

He, therefore shall be the next
New com- men.Sr. at Presbyterian that we shall pro-
Pauls. p duce for this notion of Schism,
14. not necessarily inclusive of the
Brownists rigid principles.

He tells us plainly, as I observed in my
other book, their holding one head and one
faith with us doth not excuse them from being
guilty of breach of unity and down-right
Schism, as long as they hold not one body, one
Baptism. As if he had said, let your prin-
ciples be what they will, you are down-
right Schismatics while you seperate and
break our unity.

Ep to his Rest As for Separation, Mr.
printed 1669. Baxter tells us, that the mis-
chief of it lies not in the
bare error of judgment, but in the unchristian
and Church-dissolving division,
and Alienation which thence follow-
eth.

Yea, let us know the man that did ever

directly or by any clear consequence to be drawn from his words, print such a Notion of Schysm, as includes the Brownists rigid principles about our Churches, &c. in the Nature of it. Examine Cameron, Ames, Hales, Brinsley, and if any others be dearer to you, and see, whether their definitions take in any such thing; or can bear such an exposition, as you would put upon them. See how Mr. Cawdrey and the London Ministers, at Sion-Colledg deal with the Independents in the point; and whether you can possibly perswade your self, to continue in the beleif, that for the reasons you have alledged, the Non-Conformists may gather Churches and not be Seperatists in the judgment of the Presbyterians, before the year 1660. or any of the old Non-Conformists: you may see their Judgment in general by a few quotations out of their writings.

CHAP. XVIII.

Testimonies of Non-Conformists for the same.

Give me leave to usher in this worthy *verdict*, with an Argument after your own mode.

I will undertake to prove, that the *Non-Conformists*, both *Ancient and Modern*, before 1660. held, gathering *Churches out of our Churches* unlawful and Schysinatical, and that absolutely, without any reference to the principles upon which it is don, much less the *Brownistical*.

Do you prove afterwards, if it be possible, that they supposed your *New distinctions* and evasions, or that they, at any time let words drop from them signifying an allowance of *Separation* from our *Churches* and setting up *new ones*, upon such weak *grounds* as you stand upon.

Mr. Ball. Mr. Ball I had mentioned in my last, as one of the old *Unitans*, that had wrote for Communion with *our Parochial Congregations*; you tell

me subtilly, that he speaks not against Non-Conformists preaching, and that's an Answer. But I must now add, that, that great Nonconformist doth not plead for our Communion as *awful*, but in a sort necessary; and that to seperate from us is a *sinfull Separation.*

Ep to his I. vol. Friendly such Separation is the *Wound of Tryal.* the Church, —— yea, who-soever seperateth from the body of the Church seperateth from Christ in that respect. —— Voluntary Separation from the Lords Table, and the Prayers (he reckoned upon more than bearing Sermons) of the Congregation, what is but a willing Excommunicating of our selves from the visible tokens of the Lords presence and love —— is it not a greater sin in Members to deprive themselves (then in the Church Governors to deprive others) of the same Communion for small occasions? you see he makes the *smallness* of the occasion of Separation to be Emphasis and Aggravation of it.

Again more smartly in his Answer to *Can.*

Epistle Thus, ' Separation from the true Churches of Christ, his Ministry and Worship (of which sort I shall prove that to be by the word of God, for which I plead) meaning the Church of England

gland) tendeth not to the overthrow of Anti-Christ, but to the Renting of the Church, the disgrace of Religion, the Advancement of Pride, Schyfsm, Contention, the offence of the weak, the grief of the Godly, who be better setled, the hardning of the Wicked, and the Recovery or rising again of Anti-Christ.

2. Let worthy Mr. Hilderham lay down his grave and weighty point
Hilderham upon clearly and boldly, and like
4. Job. p. 149. himself 'tis this; *These As-*
semblies that enjoy the Word and Doctrine
of Salvation; though they have *many Cor-*
ruptions remaining in them, are to be ac-
knowledged the true Churches of God,
and such as none of the faithful may make
Separation from. (He will not allow you,
upon pretence of purity and serving God
better in your way, to seperate and gather
Churches, not any one, none of the faithful)
he proceeds to prove it largely: and it may
be well known how severe he is, against the
faithful, that will ordinarily leave their ha-
nest Minister, to hear those that are more
able: upon pretences of profiting better by
them: which is yet the best plea the present
Separation hath for it self.

Calvin Insti. li. 4. 3. *M. Calvin speaks to the*
point with no mean Authority
sett. 9, 10. 12.

rity. He tells us, that wheresoever the
 "Gospel is purely preached, and the Sacra-
 "ments Administred according to the Insti-
 "tution of Christ ; there is the Church of God.
 " There appears neither a *deceitful* nor
 "doubtful face of a Church, of which no
 "man may either despise the *Authority*, or
 refuse the *Admonition*; or resist the *Counsels*
 "or mock at the *Corrections*; much less de-
 part from it, breaks in sunder the Unity
 "of it, and go unpunished.

"For the Lord so highly esteems the *Com-*
munion of the Church, that he counts him
 "for a *Traiterous run-away*, and forsaken of
 "Religion; whosoever shall *stubbornly e-*
strange himself from any Christian fellow-
 ship, so that it be *such* a one as hath the
 "true *Ministry* of the word and *Sacra-*
ments.

"The fellowship of *such* a Church, is not
 "to be cast off; although it swarm *full of*
 "faults, though there be faults in the Ad-
 ministration, either of *Doctrine*, or of the
 "Sacraments; yet we ought not to *estrangle*
 "our selves from the Communion of it: for
 "all the *Articles* be not of one sort: and
 "therefore for every *light desettion* we
 ought not *rashly* to forsake the Church.

¶ The value which our English Presby-
 terians just before the Wars, had of our
 Church

Letter of many Ministers in Old England, to their brethren in new England, pub by Mr. Ash, &c 1643.

Church and its lay-Communion is not impertinent but very considerable : together, with the Censure as refused it.

' They speak to their brethren in New England thus, if we deny Communion with such a Church as ours; there hath been ' no Church these 1400 years, with which ' a Christian might lawfully joyn. Nay, ' that if such scruples as are now in your ' heads may take place, it will be unlawful to hold Communion with any society under Heaven.

Gifford Print-ed 1590. 5. Mr. Gifford an old Non-Conformist, wrote a book

call'd a plain Declaration; wherein he doth not vindicate every thing in our Church; but that there is no sufficient Cause of separation; Complains thus; ' some are proceeded to this that they will ' come to the Assemblies to hear Sermons ' and the Prayers of the Preacher; but not ' to the prayers of the Book; which I take to ' be a more grievous sin than many do suppose. But yet this is not the worst; for suddenly are gone farther; and fallen into a damnable Schism; and the same so much the more fearful and dangerous, in that many do

'not see the foulness of it; but rather hold
'them as Godly Christians; and but a little
over-shot in some matters.

6. We come now to review the Testimo-
nies we gave in our last, from the late Pres-
byterian Controversie with the Independents:
we pitcht upon some words of the *Provin-
cial Assembly in London*: and the Argument
sent to the *Assembly of Divines* by the *Lon-
don Ministers* from *Sion Colledge*, two emi-
nent bodies of known *Presbyterians*. And
we yet see no reason to judg, but their
words and Arguments are very direct and
full to the purpose; especially considering,
the most pittifull shifts of our Answerer a-
bout them.

Jus divin. As to the words, in the *Divine
Reg. Eccl.* right of *Presbytery*, he saith, that
book was supposed to be penn'd
by *Dr Roberts* now a *Conformist*. But what
doth he mean? was he a *Conformitt* then?
or doth not the book plead for the *Presby-
tery*, and its *Jus Divinum*? and in the same
fence by which he himself defines a *Presby-
terian*? yea, was it not owned by, and pub-
lished under the name of the *provincial As-
sembly of Presbyterians*? and what matter is
it then who pen'd it? the like dealing you
use about *Mr. Trapp*: you say he is a *Confor-
mist*, what then? hath he not given a just
account

account of the book written by the *London Ministers*, as I said he did? their reasons alledged by me, were alledged by a *Conformist*: yet they are theirs still. What manner of answering is this? It were not pardonable with *some Adversaries*, but you are fallen into merciful hands.

The *Authority* of the persons then is clear: the words I cited out of the preface to that book called, *Ius Divinum regiminis Ecclesiastici*, were these, *Parochial Churches are received as true visible Churches of Christ, and most convenient for edification: gathering Churches out of Churches hath no footsteps in Scripture: is contrary to Apostolical practice: is the scattering of Churches, the Daughter of Schism: the Mother of Confusion and the step-Mother of edification.*

Observe, they condemn *gathering Churches* out of our *Churches*: *absolutely*, and without any respect to the *principles* upon which it was done particularly, they call it the *Daughter of Schism*, *seperation* in order unto the *gathering* of *Churches* being *Schism* it self, in the then *Presbyterian* opinion.

The *Arguments*, I took out of *Sion-Coll.* the *Letter* of the *London Ministers* to the *Assembly* were these, the *Independents* are guilty of *Schism*. 1. Because they refuse

fuse Communion with our Churches in the Sacraments. 2. They erect separate Congregations under a separate undiscovered Government: never charging them with any Brownistical principles, but the fact it self, an undoubted proof of what they undertook to prove.

Again to the same purpose, they charge them with three great Scandals, how you will avoid either of them I cannot Devine,

1. That they separated from the true Church.
2. That they endeavoured by drawing Members out of it to make up their separate Churches, to weaken and diminish the Church.
3. That they endeavoured to get a warrant to authorize both, viz. by a Toleration: and this, say they, we think to be plainly unlawful.

Now, hereupon, I am bold to challenge our Answerer, or any one else, to prove clearly, that any one Eminent Presbyterian before 1660. was not utterly against all the three, against such separation, such gathering Churches, and such Toleration. Convince me if you can: but not by telling me they are now for them all. That they would Tolerate, things Tolerable, that is gathering Churches: and persons Tolerable, that is Presbyterians, as you speak very intelligibly.

But

But no wonder, they are chang'd in their thoughts of these things : *the case is Alter'd*, as you hint.

True, there are some new impositions upon Ministerial Conformity ; but other Alterations render our Lay-Communion more easily than it was before the wars, when the Presbyterian denied it not ; as was noted out of Mr. Baxter before ; who also assures us that he never heard of five Non-Conformists of his cure p. 13. besides the five dissenting brethren in the Assembly at Westminster ; he means, they conformed as Ministers of the Church of England before they sate there.

However, that *Churches may not be gathered out of Churches* is asserted not as a Temporary truth, but moral : depending upon the *Nature* of a Church which *never alters* : or gives any occasion of *change*, in the judgment, about this point.

The Books of Mr. Cawdrey, Cawdrey. that Captain in the Presbyterian Army against Dr. Owen, and the Independents, challenge you all. We may, saith he, 'prove them to be Schismatical. 1. by a voluntary Separation from true Churches; 'with whom we dare say, they may Communicate without sin, and so consequently, 'causelessly rending the body of Christ. 2. By their

' their renouncing Communion with us , to
 Independ. further ' set up a Church of another
 prou'd Schys p.73,74 ' ther constitution ; and so
 condemning our Churches
 ' ipso facto , as no truely constituted Churches.
 Mark , condamning our Churches ipso facto .
 Their very Act is enough ; whether they avow such principles or not : and consequently , what ever you pretend to the contrary ; your very departure from us , and making new Churches , does of it self condemn you of Schysm .

Ind. great Schysm. He concludes his first book
 bravely , they , saith he , that
 ' raise differences in them i. e.
 ' in our Churches : and draw disciples from
 ' them and renounce Communion with them ,
 ' say what they please or can to the contrary
 ' are Schysmaticks quod erat demonstran-
 ' dum .

I only assume , that generally the Non-Conformists make differences in our Churches , draw Disciples from them , and renounce Communion with them , quod erat demonstratum , And now I beg leave of my Answerer to conclude with the words in my last , that so inuch offended him ; that I am sure the Presbyterians , (if they walk by the principles of their Fathers before the Kings return) I am sure , I say , that they have no reason

reason to engage in a way of publique worship,
contradistinct to our Parochial Congregati-
on.

The Issue of the travers, saith
Of Schysm, Mr. Brinsley, is no more but
p. 53. this. It there be amongst us, a
‘ Separation from a true Church, and that
‘ both voluntary and unwarrantable [as the
‘ present practice of gathering Churches by
‘ the Presbyterians is] (which I suppose the
‘ evidences given in, have sufficiently evicted)
‘ then must we give sentence, that there is
‘ more then either *crimen nominis*, or no-
‘ *men criminis*, no less than a *Schysm* for-
‘ mally and properly so called.

CHAP. XXI.

Gathering of Churches ought not to be practi-
sed, as now it is, either, in Conscience, or
prudence. Objections answered.

YET, we are not at a full Agreement: he
seems every where, to take it for
granted, that, we are now, at perfect li-
berty, to gather new Churches or not, which,
by no means, I allow, while my principles
stand undemolish't: Such as these.

That our *Church of England* is a true
Church:

Church that our *parochial Congregations* are true Churches that the people of *England* are generally, Members of *this Church* and *Churches*; or at least *ought* so to be. That they *lawfully* may, and consequently are, in *Duty* and *Conscience* bound to *Communicate* with them. And therefore, for them to *Separate*, and to *gather themselves* into *new Congregations*, of *another constitution*, is plainly *sinful* and *Schismatical*.

Upon the *premises*, I doe conclude, that *Conscience* ought first to be consulted in the case : and the many *obligations* thereof, effectually and totally removed, before you can make it a matter of *indifference* in it self, and of *more Christian prudence pro hic & nunc*, as you seem to affirm.

Our *Obligation* to this Communion falls many wayes upon us : from our *Relation* to the *Church*; the *laws of cohabitation* of *Church-Members*, the *Laws of the Kingdome*, and the *long continued practice* of this *Church*: none of all which, are in the least *touched*, much less *Altered* or *Repealed* by the *Declaration of Indulgence*.

Besides, the many *express Scriptures* against our *forsaking our (wonted) Assemblies*, *Separating our selves*, *making parties* and *divisions* in the *Church*: having our *Teachers* in too much *Admiration*, and *heaping them*

them up to ourselves, and receiving the *faith* with respect of persons: and drawing Disciples after us, in all which, both the present case, and the several Consciences of the Non-conformists, whether Preachers or people, are in my opinion, not lightly concerned. Shake off the Burthen as well as you can.

Until these things be better answered, I must add here; that the case is of weight in point of *Conscience*, as well as prudence: and that gathering *Churches*, as now you do, is a breach of the *Laws* both of *God* and *Man*; a *Sin* against our *Church* in her *Right*, in our persons and fellowship: both with respect to our *Pastors* and Brethren: and a plain breach of our *Covenant* with them all; a breach of the *Churches Unity*, and *Order*, and *Ancient bounds* and *Customs*, and in the *Teachers* that draw away our people, besides all that hath been said, a plain robbing of *God*, the *Church* and our *Brother*. To conclude, if the *Laws* of *Piety*, *Justice*, *Temperance*, or *Charity*, can reach the *Conscience*, every one of which are violated by this gathering of *Churches*, the case is not a work of meer Christian prudence, and to be determined only comparing the good and evil consequents together, as you say p. 21.

But supposing my foundations to stand firm, and *Conscience* in the point well secured:

red: we may partly a little upon it in point of prudence: especially, seeing you affirm p. 21. that, he that through imprudence missudgeth either *w^{is}y* doth sin. Moreover you confess, that the case is now of so great moment, that no Minister should rashly determine it for himself, p. 20. nor upon the desires of some of the people only; but should consult with wise and sober men that are impartial, but, if the case be so difficult for the Readers, who you say, *must preach*, how difficult is the case for the people? for it is, nowhere said, they *must separate*, and leave us to bear you, yea, your self teach the contrary.

You state your nice Case, thus, p. 17, 18. whether in competent parishes, which have Able and Godly conformable Ministers, the obligation to hold Union and Communion with the parish-Church; or the obligation to exercise a more regular way of Church-Discipline and worship, than the Parish-Churches do or will do, should be judged the more prevalent; and consequently, whether they should gather Churches out of Churches in this?

A Case not so difficult, as you seem to make it, if there be as you have heard, so much obligation upon Conscience to the former part of it touching Communion with us: and none at all left, for their gathering-Churches for

for the ends assigned by you, for they can neither leave us without sin; nor gather Churches without sin; as, we hope it hath appeared.

Your opinion is given upon a double *supposition*, and both of them *false*. 1. That the case is *indifferent*; or, at least, the obligation to both, so *equal*, as, that it is to be weighed only by *prudence*. 2. That it is lawful and a *duty* to be a Member of such a *Parish-Church* (only) when we can have and do no better [*i. e.* in our own opinion] and that when we can, we have *liberty* to *forsake our own Church*, though, I confess your *explication* of having or *doing better*, hath some tendency to a right determination of this great point, viz: you say, *we cannot have or do better*, when it cannot be without a greater hurt to the publicke interest of the *Gospel*, the *Church*, and the souls of men, then the benefit to us and others is like to countervail. But I must add (as the case requires,) especially, when that benefit, cannot be had without sinning our selves, and drawing others to sin with us by our endeavours, *Scandal*, and example; which, I think, we too plainly and manifestly do, by gathering *Churches*.

Now give me leave, to make a *supposition*; and I shall immediately take the *Scale* and weigh the consequents, as you say, on both

sides. - My supposition is, that this case which you call the *difficult one*, is the very case with most Non-Conformists, who do now gather Churches, for as our *Parish-Ministers* are generally, more *Tolerable* than you seem to allow them; so, especially are they of the *better sort*, and truely *able*, and *Godly*, and our Parishes, in your own sense, *competent* enough, where, for the most part, they have hitherto set about this *new experiment*, which, it seems, renders the case so *difficult* in your own opinion, that, I fear, you will have cause enough to *censure* the *rashness* of their unadvised undertaking of it.

But now to the *Scales*, wherin we must weigh. 1. The *Benefits* to be hoped. 2. The *evils* to be feared, will follow such gathering Churches.

You pitch upon three great *Benefits*. 1. The pleasing of God (*when we know it is his will*) and the profit of mens souls by the most regular manner of *discipline* and *Worship*. [But be sure you know it is *his Will*] you your self make it *very difficult* to know this, even for the *Teachers*; how much more for the *people*. The *same Argument* will put us upon the Reformation of the *State* too, when we know it is *Gods will*. This we know to be *Gods will*; that we serve God

the

the best we can in our places : that we move for a *Reformation* in a peaceable and regular way, that we preserve the *unity* and *Communion* of the Church. That we *obey our Civil and Ecclesiastical Governors*: these things we know to be *Gods will*: and we know that he is not the *God of Confusion*, but of *order* in his Churches; and what tends to *disorder* and *confusion*, we know it is *not Gods will*; but how we shall know that it is *his will* we should *reform* the Church *upon our own heads*, and therefore *Separate* from true Churches and *gather Churches*, in order to better *Worship* and discipline, if so it prove, this we know *not*.

2. The second Benefit, is the setting up an imitable Example of right Discipline, and worship to other Churches i.e. Setting up a Standard with the former Narrative of the grounds of the War. But heads, severely, then woe to them that set up a worse. And, in your Conscience, is not this woe likely to be generall? how many hundred years hath our Discipline been exposed to examination, and for the substance of it, what part can envy it self, find fault with this? are the short Counsels of our new Reformers likely to mend it? besides, how will you do, that are for *Episcopacy*? you will not regulate that by having none; or by making other Bishops

shops I hope. As for our Worship, I presume, the Reformed Liturgy will not take place, except in your own Congregation? and sure, that we have already, is better than none at all: as it is with your brethren of the new Churches.

3. Your last benefit is a marvellous one indeed, the satisfying the Consciences of honest mistaken people, who think it unlawful to communicate with us. i. e. we must break the Churches in pieces, to feed the mistakes and ill humours of honest people, if they are honest, remove their mistakes, teach them truth, and wisdom, and peace, and duty, and persuade them to keep their Station and Communion with us; and I doubt not, but that you and they will find this to be the greater benefit of the two at last, as well as we.

You may see there is no good to be done by the practise, and you, in the next place, see what a swarm of mischiefs attend it. I shall observe the things you fear your self; and indeed, they are more in number, weight, and measure too, then the benefits you mentioned.

1. ' This mischief is likely to follow their gathering-Churches as you well observe: ' the exasperating the minds for number and ' quality considerable, and so alienating from their

' their brethren, and binding them. 2.
' Thereby weakning the Protestant Interest
' in a time which requireth our greatest con-
' cord. 3. Then setteng of parties against
' parties, and Churches against Churches; and
' turning of Religion into contentions and
' mutual oppositions. 4. The countenance-
' ing of unlawful Separations; which will
' all shelter themselves under such examples,
' and the Dividers will not see the different
' principles on which we go, while our pra-
' ctice seemeth to be the same. 5. And so it
' may be injurious to future ages, by seeming
' to give them Presidents for unlawful Sep-
' aration. 6. And it is not the least evil con-
' sequent, that we shall cherish not only
' the error of those that think worse of the
' Parish-Worship and Assemblies than there is
' cause; but we shall also accidentally nou-
' rish their pride, who will think themselves
' a holier people, because they erroneously
' over-censure the persons and practices of o-
' thers

These are they *evil consequents*, which you
wisely foresee will follow these new *Chur-*
ches: and you cannot, I think, prudently avoid
them, but by forbearing that practice, and
perswading your brethren to do so likewise.
For you confess, when the *publique good* for-
bids it [as no doubt, it now doth] p. 22.

The Tolerated Ministers must not gather distinct Church-Assemblies, but joyn with the publique Churches, and help the people by their instructions at other times. And not to bry up the people in their weakness, which you well observe, p. 23. inclineth them to causeless separations and disjunctions.

But who shall now hold the beam? let any hand but your own, and, I am sure, the inconveniences you have mentioned, must needs preponderate, those shadows of benefit that the practice pretends to.

'Tis the known and stated judgment of the Church in all Ages that defects, yea and many corruptions (which you charge us not withal) are far more tollerable, and not so hazardous to the Church, as Separation by the breach of unity; and then what shall we think of the formal and positive Schysim in gathered Churches.

The Novatians, Audeans, and Donatists had all the same pretence of better discipline and worship than the publique; theretore, they gathered themselves into distinct Churches for reformation and greater purity in Religion: but for this, they stand recorded for Schysmatics and Peats of the Church, in the writings of the Fathers and Church-Historians.

You acknowledge, our errors are Toller-
able,

ble, (else you would not Communicate with us;) and this is a standing rule in the Church, *si error est tolerabilis, non iparet fieri Secessionem.* If the errors or scandals of the Church be *Tolerable*, we ought not to leave it, and what's the reason? because of the dangerous *Cameron. de Schys.* consequents that have ever followed *Separation*, and the beauty and holiness of unity in Religion.

Sir I perceive I need not endeavour to quicken your sense of the fearful effects of separation: and should I begin to speak of them there would be no end; God grant we may never feel them; and therefore that *Pareus.* you, and I, and every man, may do our proper endeavour to prevent and heal them. *Schismate luxantur membra Ecclesiae.* *Membra luxit et inepta sunt ad suz munera obenanda: membra P. Mart.* *luxit et gravissimo dolore corpus afficiunt.* Schism in the Church puts the members out of joyst: members out of joyst are unfit for service: and cause great dolours and disquietment to the whole body.

What sharp contentions and ruptures in the bowels of the Church, what Wars and desolations in Nations, hath Schytin been the original of? what sighs and warnings did the seperation of the Brownist draw from the

the Puritans^d and of the late Sectaries from the Presbyterians^e all this cannot be forgotten, though in the midst of our Eu'sles, and our new joyes for our present liberty, we mind it not.

I shall not repent my former inconveniences: the fear of which, at leist, some of them, is yet still upon us: notwithstanding ing, &c.

Vid Baxt. def. of his cure p. 51. 52, 53. &c. Dividing principles will give shelter to all kind of Heresies and Sects; of which experience is too full a proof — and

Shall we stand by and see this work go on, and neither lament their sin that drive men to this, nor warn them of the passions and principles that lead to it? and who knoweth not how fair a game the Papists have to play by the means of our Divisions?

CHAP. XX.

More particular address to the Answer , a friendly expostulation about his hard words and dealing. We must preach. And we may gather Churches to serve God better: two great cheats, a desire he would detect them.

Sir, I perceive, by some *Golden* lines, drawn here and there, upon your *Rough* and *Rugged* peice (pardon the expressions) that though we differ in our measures, yet, we intend the same end: and in general, by the same means. Let us then, in cold blood, as friends frown out use to do, let us expostulate a little, and be friends again.

I confess, I thought I could not reply to much of your book, but in *Mirth or Anger*: the former I rather chose; and have sometimes used, but make it my publique request, that neither your self, nor any one else would take it in contempt of your person or parts.

But

But if my *pleasantness* hath, indeed, displeased you; pray, reflect a little seriously upon the *manner*, how you dealt with me, without any *provocation*. · And consider both the *Example* and *Rule*, you give me. p. 4. and I am apt to conceive, you will require no further *satisfaction*: yea, and that for the future, you will learn this *lesson*; not to *despise* your Adversaries person or parts; least of one you make two; and instead of *Reason*, you stir up and provoke *Folly* and *Madness*.

If any thing hath miss'd my eye, and consideration, that you conceive to be *argumentative*: believe me, it was not *design'd*. I left your *Method*, because I had a mind to review the point *throughly*, and once for all: and therefore you are secure from any *further* trouble from me, in this matter (unless I see more reason hereafter, than now I can foresee,) Yet I promise you, that if, without *Insulting*, you will shew me any *Argument* which was overlookt, I promise you faithfully, I will either *Answer* it, or acknowledge I cannot.

Indeed, some *parts* of your Book I have willingly declined to insist upon; there being observable in them, the defects of *Pertinence* and *Charity*: which I impute to your *hast* and *hastiness*: and thank God, that I know how

how to allow something to the best of men,
for their Natural Temper.

Yet so far as we are *vertuous*, we cannot
be unwilling to hear of our *faults*, especially,
with meekness of reason, and in a
friendly expostulation: which, I hope, may
well enough admit me to tell you *plainly*,
that I have found neither *kind words*, nor
fair dealing in your book.

For your *Words*: calling my Arguments
silly; questioning my *Witt* and *Moderation*, ren-
dering me guilty of *Noise*, instead of *Sences*;
of *Confusion* and immeasurable *confidence*;
these, and such like, do not much affect me,
but I confess, when you speak of my *perni-*
tious fallacies, that goes something near me,
as also when you number me with *facioners*:
disputers; when, God knows, I intended
nothing, as I said in my last, but *to save the*
people from sin, and the *Church from confusion*
and ruine, by gross *Separation*.

For your *fair dealing*, I mean, not only,
that you would *make me affirm*, what I
never said, or thought, for of that I have
delivered my self before: or so much that
you seem to ly upon the *Catch* for little *over-*
fights, which concern not the *Controversy*;
though by the way take an *Instance* or two
of *this Nature*.

Whereas I say, p. 28. they *cannot but*
under-

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understand the Declaration to prohibite all such private meetings as the Law calls conventicles. What an out-cry do we hear? you know not whose understandings you talk of—and with Scorn—why should you judge us to be as wise as your self.

But where's the victory? doth not the very Declaration it self suppose *unlawful Conventicles*? or what if I had lipt, and put in the word *Law* for *Declaration*? was it unpardonable? it looks ill, when we design disgrace to our Adversary, without any advantage to our Cause, and what have you gained by this *Noble* quarrel, but the name of *Conventicles*? and so branded by the *Law*; a name, one would think, not much worth the contention, if we Admit the Learned Hale's definition of it; a *Conventicle* saith he, is nothing else but a *Congregation of Schysmaticks*.

Tract of Schys p. 14. Take but one Instance more; I had said, p. 14. that I thought I might safely say, that the Declaration doth not so much as uncommand anything which the Law properly commands. But had you heeded one word among the rest, you would hardly have entered this exception: p. 45. I mean the word, properly; which you, to seeming Advantage leave out in your *Reflexion*, for who knows not, that the main matter for which

which the *Law* is framed, is the thing *properly*, and directly *commanded* by the *Law*? and that the *execution* of the *penalty*, and the *command* thereof, are but in subserviency thereunto; and, only of force, *conditionally*, in case the *Law*, in the *proper* matter of it, be disabused?

And your exception to the other paragraph, hath yet less colour. I say, the *Declaration* medles not with the *Law*, either in the *preceptive* or *punitive part of it*. But I still take it to be beyond your skill in the *Law*, to confute me in this; and to be beyond dispute, that the *Law* in both these parts of it, had its *being* from the *Legislative power*; and the *Declaration* from the *Executive power*: and that this cannot operate, to the change of that at all. The true *internal vigour* of the *Law* is still the same; and 'tis your mistake to think that the *Declaration* suspends the *command*, or so much as the *punitive part of the Law*: it suspendeth only the *Actual Execution* of the *Law*, as *pænal*: and allows such meetings, as break the *Law*, and incur its *penalty*, to abide unpunished; think on it well, and you may be of my mind.

Of these by the way, which indeed had not found their place here, could I have reduced them to any head of discourse above: yet now I am upon it let me whisper it in your ear,
without

without any great noise about it, that there
is one Paragraph of yours, that,
^{p. 45 last}
^{par or Sect} could I take pleasure in such little
reflections, I could shew, to have
as many real Soloecisms in it, as you have
noted in my whole Book.

But, I am not careful for these things: you deal more hardly with me, when you lay presumption and cruelty to the Non-conformists at my doer, cannot I imagine that they do not only desire to escape the penalty of the Laws, but erect separate Churches to themselves; but I must be an Ithacian Master, and make you feel my meaning, and give occasion to cry out as you do, but, my Brother, what good will our sufferings do you? do you feel yourself ever the more at liberty when we are in the Common-Gaoles? are you the fuller because some Non-Conformists want bread?

Is this reasonable, charitable, or candid? what ground have you for it, either in my words or deeds? would you not think you had wrong'd me, if some Non-Conformists should tell you, that I have run some hazards and suffered in my Name for their Liberty? and if a peaceable silenz'd Minister should testify, that he and his Family have many years together, had the greatest part of their livelihood from my Charity? But I must forbear, though you provoke me, least
you

you should have just cause to impeach my *Modesty*, and think you have cause to say, that **I**, in a sense, call you *Persecutor*.

But who am **I**, when, alas, the *whole body* of Conforming *Clergy*, (though you have said, that *many* of them are *pious, able, and faithfull* in their places yet) you more than seem to *load* them, p. 74. with the *unchristian like* charge of *perjury, perfidiousness, and persecution*, *proud, contending who shall be greatest, and Covenanting, never in certain points to obey Christ against the World and the Flesh.*

And, you cannot but know, this is no way Argumentative: unless you design'd to *weaken* the *Affections* of the people towards us, and so to prepare them for a separation: which **I** am not willing to believe: for that **I** find, you, in many other places, so earnestly perswading to the *contrary*.

Sir, I do not presume to advise you: but Sir, if you shall think to write any more upon this matter, let me beseech you seriously to consider, whether your own *principles*, and the present *vile practises* of separation, contrary thereunto, would not more worthily and more seasonably draw your studies *another way*.

I know, that the peace and reputation, and Integrity, of our Parochial Churches are dear to you, however you were tempted to mistake me, and to let some things fly, some things that may chance to prejudice them more than you would.

There are *two* principles scattered up and down your Answerer, that I here mainly aim at, and into these indeed, all its strength resolves. 1. That the Non-Conformists *must preach*. 2. That to the end the people may serve God better, they may gather themselves into *other* Churches. The first of these would not concern me in the *defence* of my *other Book*, neither, doth the allowance of it, draw a *necessity* of gathering Churches, as we have made to appear above the latter of them, indeed, lies at the bottom of all that you say against me, and I have often spoken to it, even, where ever I met it I am now making my *Petition* in the Churches behalf, that you would lay to heart the *certain Divisions* and confusions that must needs follow, upon the *practise* of both these *principles*, *jointly received*, and improved by the skill of *Dividers*, and the cunning craftiness of such as lie in wait for that purpose.

The first of these, that they *must preach*, give me leaye to say, as it is the present Engine

gine for division, is a plain cheat put upon the World, and not to be countenanced by an honest man.

They must preach, but why? because of the Text, because of the necessities of the people, and lastly, because of their Relation to their old Flocks, of each a little.

They must preach, because the Text saith, there is a necessity laid upon us, and woe be to us if we do not preach.

Ans. But, my Brethren, what if you have no opportunity, and the Churches are all full, must ye preach still? We have before noted, from Mr. Baxter, that where there is no opportunity there is no duty, and consequently, there is no necessity no Woe, &c is it not plain enough, that while you have no particular flock, especially, while the Law forbids you to have any, you have no opportunity to preach publickly: can have no opportunity to be so busie in another mans Diocese: nor warrant in Conscience without leave from the Laws, which are still obliging notwithstanding, &c, and the License of the Bishop, or the Parochial Minister, to whose people you would preach.

It ought to be remembred, this Doctrine is perfect Brownism, and condemn'd as such by the Old Non-Conformists, who held and defended against the Brownists, that though themselves were only suspended, and had yet by Law the possession of their places and no other

could lay claim to their flocks , yet, being only thus suspended , they ought not to preach publiquely to their own people.

Whether suspended or degraded , their Doctrine was not the necessity to preach, as you and the Brownist say, but to keep silent.

For so long said they, as the Bishops suspend and deprive according to Law , we account of the Action herein , as of the Act of the Church, if they do otherwise we have liberty given us , by the Law to appeal from them.

Obj. But we think in our Consciences that the causes of our Silencing are not sufficient to justify it. This very Objection also the Brownists used to the Non-Conformists of old, and received this Answer from them.

Ans. It lies say they, in them to depose that may ordain, and they may shut that may open. And that, as he may with a good Conscience execute a ministry, by the Ordination and calling of the Church who is privie to himself of some unfitness (if the Church will press him to it) so may he who is privy to himself of no fault that deserves Deprivation, cease from the execution of his Ministry, when he is pressed thereunto by the Church. And indeed, if a guiltless person put out of his charge, by the Churches Authority, may yet continue in it, what proceedings can there be against guilty persons, who in their own conceits , are alwaies guiltless, or will at least

' least pretend so to be ; seeing they also will
' be ready alway to object against the *Chur-*
' *ches judgment*, that they are called of *God*,
' and may not therefore , give over the exe-
' cution of their Ministry at the will of
Man.

Obj. But how shall we answer the *Text*,
woe be to us if we do not preach? Thus also the
Brownists urged against the Non-Conformists,
and were thus solidly answered.

Ans. The case now, and in the *Apostles*
' times, is far different. *First*, they that *inbi-*
' *bited* the Apostles, were known and profes-
' sed *Enemies* to the *Gospel*: *Secondly*, the
' *Apostles* were charged, not to teach in the
' name of *Christ*, nor to publish any part of
' the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*; which *Comman-*
' *dement*, might more hardly be yielded unto,
' than this of our *Bishops*, who are not only con-
' tent that the *Gospel* should be preached, but
' are also *Preachers* of it *themselves*. *Lastly*, the
' *Apostles* received not their calling & Autho-
' *rity from men*, nor by the hands of *men*,
' but immediately from *God* himself; and
' therefore might not be restrain'd or depos'd
' by *Men*: whereas, we, though we exercise
' a Function whereof *God* is the *Author*, and
' are also called of *God* to it, yet are we cal-
' led and ordained by the hand and *Ministry*
' of *men*, and therefore may by *men* be also
' depos'd, and restrained from the exercise of
' our *Ministry*.

These three last objections and answers are taken out of a Book called a grave and modest confutation of the errors of the Sect called Brownists or Separatists : Agreed upon long since by the joint consent of many Ministers then standing out in the cause of Non-Conformity published by Mr. Rathbun 1644. par. 2. p. 41, 42.

2. They *must preach*, because the people need it, the necessities of thousands of Souls require it.

Yet you ask, is the notorious need of many hundred thousand souls no reason? —— is the relieving of many Godly Christians who are cast out of your Communion because they dare not conform, no reason?

But I am still confident you have *no reason*, or no good ones: for, I believe you have brought out the best you had, to make this vapour, and for the credit of the Cause: for neither these, nor their fellows as hath appeared, are worth a fig: and yea, some would tell you they are *rotten*, they have great *Worms* in them; and are only fit to please *Children*.

• Doe but open these *reasons*, and you will presently find they are deceitful *wares*, and nothing but *skin*. The sense of them is, Non-Conformists *must preach*, upon a double reason, taken from the people. 1. from their numbers. 2. From their *quality*.

i. From

1. From their numbers. Many hundred thousand souls, souls. thousand souls, hundred thousand souls, many hundred thousand souls and all these need, notoriously need, Non-conformists preaching. Here is strength of Argument indeed, and is this no reason? I am sure his Rhetorick, as sweet to some mens palates.

But, I marvail at two things: first, that this great necessity should be so notorious to none but your selves, and that a Christian Government should notoriously be guilty of the blood of so many hundred thousand souls, by suffering them to perish for lack of knowledge, had another said it, I should have answered, this is a most notorious slander.

The second thing, I wonder at, is, how any Conscientious man dare say, contrary to plain sense and Fact, that this is the Reason necessitating Non-Conformists to preach, as they do. Seeing, in the places worst served, we so seldom hear of your new Congregations. But, as some Mountebanks pretend to cure the head by applications to the feet, you have skill to work by a quite contrary method you will cure the feet by tampering with the head.

In plain English; all this is but a blind and a Starving-Horse, behind which, these fowlers lurk, to catch their Game, and to draw our best and fattest Partridge into their Net:

it is *Cities*, *Corporations*, and the *Wealthiest* parts of the Kingdome; where they *Tinkle* their Bells and draw *Swarms* to their Hives that will yeild most *Honey*,

You seem some where p. 74. to tax my *Charity* or *Verity* in an intimation tending this way; but my particular experience, as well as general, and not to be controled, observation, was my *Warrant*. I will trouble you with a pat Instance of two or three Non-Conformists in a place where I am well acquainted; and I count them not a whit the lesse honest for their plain dealing in the point,

One of them, that hath a *Licence* to preach in a *Country House*, near the place where he lives, told me himself, that, unless he should know, what they would *pay* him, he would not *preach* among them: and I suppose, they differed upon that point, for he is gon off, and joyned himself with a *Brother* of another Church. Another, licenc'd to preach in his own *Parish*, where he rents a *Farm*, told the *Minister* of that Parish, that he would loose 50. pound by his *Farm*, that he might remove, and place himself in a *Corporation*, that is indeed very well furnisht with *Ministers*, and better without his Company. A third, also licenc'd to preach in his own *House* yet, one Lords day in three, as I am informed by a pretty good hand, rides twelve miles to exercise

exercise his gifts in a great Town, not meanly provided with *publique preachers*. And all these three, within eight miles one of another: and these are plain and honest men, and doubtless speak their own and their Brethrens minds, for by this foot you may guess at *Hercules*.

I cannot forbear hereupon to commend the wit of that excellent man, who said smartly, & ingenuously some years ago. I doubt they see their Condition would be woful indeed, if they preach the Gospel there (in the Country Cures, that are *worst served*;) and theretore they shoule have added two words to the Apostiles speech and said, Woe be to us if we preach not the Gospel in *London*, (or in *Bristol*, or in *Exon*, or in *Plymouth*, *Tetnes* or *Dartmouth*). There is little to be got by preaching it to the poor Country folk. Thole a barren places to sow the seed in, and will bring forth small profit to themselves, and so they would do well to say, in plain English (and I should think them honest men if they did) *Necessity is laid upon us to tell you the Truth, we must preach, to get a living.*

Many such Tricks there are, you know, to be done by Numbers; but when they are once discovered, they are as sily as this.

2. But their quality may be considerab: that's the other reason of necessity. For ye

Ask, is the receiving of many Godly Christians, who are cast out of your Communion because they dare not conform, no Reason?

Sr, will you say in earnest, that the Non-Conformist should countenance such in their Separation, and harden them in their sin? and that a necessity lies upon them to do so? though you your self believe that these people may not only lawfully, but that it is best for them to Communicate with the Parishes, if their Scruples and mistakes were removed?

However, the Cheat here, will be too manifest, if we open this one box: who are those that are thus to be relieved. You can mean no other but such as did not Communicate with us before the Indulgence, for such as then did, may do so still, and not need your Charity.

Then, those that are to be Relieved, must be either Independents, or Anabaptists, or Quakers, or those, that go under the Name o. Presbyterians.

Vid. p. 14. Now, I think, you your self would not head any of the three former of these Sects; or if you, or any of your brethren would stoop so low, how would they in pride trample upon you? and in derision, tell you, they have *pastors* of their own way, and need none of your care or pains.

It follows that the persons needing your relief, must be the people known by the name of Presbyterians, that did not conform before

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the Toleration; be it so. Were their Numbers so great to need the releif of so many thousand Non-Conforming Ministers, as some brag of? I would not have you Count them, leaſt you be ashamed of your Argument.

In this City, I am credibly informed, there were not above 30 or 40 at most of this quality, that ordinarily refuſed the publique and met privately before the Indulgence: and we have, they tell me, ten Non-Conformists, come into their releif. But what needed a Toleration in this Case? Ten Preachers to forty Hearers, by an easy Division might have kept within the compass of the Act. Now indeed, they have drawn a greater number together, though not of such as durſt not come to our Churches, but of such as did: but for whose Releif, the peoples or their own, ſome do give a ſhrew'd gueſs.

3. The laſt Reason alligned for Non-Conformists preaching, is not ſo confidently deli- vered, yet ſufficiently intimated: it is toun- ded in the Relation betwixt the Parish and the Ejected Minister. Yet, methinks, you ſhould conſider the enmity to order and Go- vernment and Peace, that this reaſon carries in it: and the neceſſity of Schyfim, in one or both parties, about their old and new Pa- stor, before you aſsert it any more. God is not the God of confuſion, and that which tends to confuſion he will never own.

I have, before spoken sufficiently to the unreasonableness of the principle, and shall now only note the *Fraud* of the persons, that use it to their private ends: which I know you cannot endure, for in truth, 'tis made an *Engine* to keep up a *faction* in the Church, and little else is done with it.

If they *must preach* because their *Relation* to their flock requires it, why do they not *refort* to the *places* from which they were *Ejected*? Or how can this poor pretence justify their preaching so generally in other places? Sure all that now preach, were not *Pastors* in the places where they now preach, *before*. Indeed their *Country Parishes* must now starve for them, they are generally called *bigger*. Here are *Ten Non-Conformists* in this *City*: but how many of them were *Pastors* *here Aug. 24. 62*? About *two or three*: and what *Title* they had, they best know themselves. But what pretence have the other *Leaven*? and what makes such as were *ejected* in other *Counties*, and out of *Country Parishes* to trouble this *City*? I hope none are so wise as to say, that these are to fill up the *Dead places*, to perpetuate the *Faction*.

I confess supposing their former places be not well served, and the *Ejected* did confine themselves to those places, it seems to be the most plausible colour that I have yet seen, but it is neither so, nor so, and I hope you will

abhor

abhor the Patronage of such *Inpostures*, when you have exercis'd your *second thoughts*.

2. Too much of the *necessity* of preaching: but that this may be maintained, you say, they may *gather* new *Churches*: and this must run upon a pretence of *purity*, and serving God better, than we do in *ours*, or, as you expres it in the place we lately speak of; is the *excusing* of a *Worship and Discipline more agreeable to Gods word than yours* (We are you say, p. 30. ready to give you the proof when we have leave) no Reason.

But it seems you *have not* proved it: can you fairly leave us and *gather* *Churches*, out of *ours*, before you have proved it? else, have you done your endeavour, in order to our *Conviction*, and *Reformation*? if not, your *Separation*. Let the ground be what it will, for the *Manner*, it is *Rash* and *unwarrantable*, and indeed *Schismatical*, in the judgment of the best *Casuists*, as well *Presbyterians* as others, as hath appeared before.

Yea, it hath appeared also, that *this Anabaptistical*, and *Brownistical principle of Separation*, the same, with finding *faults* and *corruptions* in our *Churches*, and the pretences of *Reformation* for purer *Churches*, and serving God in more *purity*, as they used to Cant: and that it hath no *bounds*, but naturally divides *Sect out of Sect* till it brings us to utter *Confusion*.

And you have a hard task upon your hands to perswade the people to Communicate with us as their Duty, and yet to allow gathering Churches from us for purer worship and discipline, upon this principle, that we are bound to serve God in the best way we can, and consequently, we are bound either not to serve him in a worse way, or else, we are to serve God in both Communions, and to be members of two particular Churches at once, of different Worship, Government, and Discipline.

Rather, throw it away as an unpeaceable and ungovernable principle: and do like your self, to undergirt and support the sorely threatened, and even sinking Parochial Constitution of our Churches: say what you will to the Contrary, if you take not in this mischievous Engine, you plainly Countenance all the Facinations in the Kingdome to endeavour the Ruine and subversion of them.

While we keep within the ancient bounds and constitutions, we know where we are: but if one we begin to Tumble, where we shall Stop, God only knowes. I need not mind you of the fearful end of Gnosticisme, Donatism, Brownism, and of our late Separations, which took their beginning in Independency: they all had pretences to break the Peace, under Colours of purity, but in the shuffle, they lost both, and sunk down at last, into the Sinck of Confusion and Impurity.

*Epist. to his rest
Print. 1669.* Mr. Baxter, will not suffer us to forget something to this purpose from our late experience : which methinks should keep us *awake* ‘ do not your hearts bleed (faith he) to look upon the State of England, and to think how few Towns and Cities, there be, where is any *forwardness in Religion*) that are not cut into shreds and crumbled as to Dust, by Separations and Divisions ? to think what a *Wound* we have thereby given to the *Christian name* ?

These consequences, Mr. Calvin reckons to be just judgments of God necessarily following the dissolution of the sacred Bond of Unity which the God of peace and the Father of mercy, avert from this divided and untoward generation.

God, who dost teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy holy spirit, grant us by the same spirit, to have a right judgment in all things : and evermore to rejoice in his holy Comfort , through the Merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this World may be so ordered by thy Governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all Godly quietness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.